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HINTS

TOWARDS

FORMING THE CHARACTER

OF

A YOUNG PRINCESS.

BY HANNAH MORE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

I call that a complete and generous Education, which fits a Person to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the Offices both of public and private Life; of Peace and of War.

MILTON.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON: ,

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TO
THE RIGHT REVEREND
THE LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

MY LORD,

1929/10/26/1-30 Eng. R
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Dear Sir

COULD it have been foreseen by the Author of the following pages, that, in the case of the illustrious Person, who is the subject of them, the standard of Education would have been set so high: and especially, that this Education would be committed to such able and distinguished hands, the work might surely have been spared. But as

VOL. I.

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the Second Volume was gone to the Press before that appointment was announced, which must give general satisfaction, it becomes important to request, that if the advice suggested in any part of the Work should appear presumptuous, your Lordship, and still more the Public, who might be more forward than your Lordship in charging the Author with presumption, will have the candour to recollect, that it was offered, not to the learned Bishop of Exeter, but to an unknown, and even to an imaginary Preceptor.

Under these circumstances, your Lordship will perhaps have the goodness to accept the Dedication of

these slight Volumes, not as arrogantly pointing out duties to the discharge of which you are so competent, but as a mark of the respect and esteem with which I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient
and most faithful servant,

The AUTHOR.

April 2,
1805.

P R E F A C E.

IF any book, written with an upright and disinterested intention, may be thought to require an apology, it is surely the slight work which is now, with the most respectful deference, submitted, not to the Public only, but especially to those who may be more immediately interested in the important object which it has in view.

If we were to inquire what is, even at the present critical period, one of the most momentous concerns which can engage the attention of an Englishman, who feels for his country like a patriot, and for his posterity like a father; what is that object of which the importance is not bounded by the shores of the British Islands nor limited by our colonial possessions;—with which, in its consequences, the interests, not only

of all Europe, but of the whole civilized world, may hereafter be in some measure implicated;—what Briton would hesitate to reply, The Education of the Princess Charlotte of Wales?

After this frank confession of the unspeakable importance of the subject in view, it is no wonder if the extreme difficulty, as well as delicacy of the present undertaking, is acknowledged to be sensibly felt by the Author.

It will too probably be thought to imply not only officiousness, but presumption, that a private individual should thus hazard the obtrusion of unsolicited observations on the proper mode of forming the character of an English Princess.—It may seem to involve an appearance of unwarrantable distrust, by implying an apprehension of some deficiency in the plan about to be adopted by those, whoever they may be, on whom this great trust may be devolved; and to indicate self-conceit, by conveying an intimation, after so strong an avowal of the delicacy and difficulty of the task,

task, that such a deficiency is within the powers of the Author to supply.

That Author, however, earnestly desires, as far as it may be possible, to obviate these anticipated charges, by alleging that under this free constitution, in which every topic of national policy is openly canvassed, and in which the prerogatives of the Crown form no mean part of the liberty of the subject, the principles which it is proper to instil into a royal personage, become a topic, which, if discussed respectfully, may, without offence, exercise the liberty of the British Press.

The Writer is very far, indeed, from pretending to offer any thing approaching to a system of instruction for the Royal Pupil, much less from presuming to dictate a plan of conduct to the Preceptor. What is here presented, is a mere outline, which may be filled up by far more able hands ; a sketch which contains no consecutive details, which neither aspires to regularity of design, nor exactness of execution.

To awaken a lively attention to a subject of such moment ; to point out some circumstances connected with the early season of improvement, but still more with the subsequent stages of life ; to offer, not a treatise on Education, but a desultory suggestion of sentiments and principles ; to convey instruction, not so much by precept or by argument, as to exemplify it by illustrations and examples ; and, above all, to stimulate the wise and the good to exertions far more effectual ; these are the real motives which have given birth to this slender performance.

Had the Royal Pupil been a Prince, these Hints would never have been obtruded on the world, as it would then have been naturally assumed, that the established plan usually adopted in such cases would have been pursued. Nor does the Author presume, in the present instance, to insinuate a suspicion, that there will be any want of a large and liberal scope in the projected system, or to intimate an apprehension that
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the course of study will be adapted to the sex, rather than to the circumstances of the Princess.

If, however, it should be asked, why a stranger presumes to interfere in a matter of such high concern? It may be answered in the words of an elegant critic, that in classic story, when a superb and lasting monument was about to be consecrated to beauty, every lover was permitted to carry a tribute.

The appearance of a valuable elementary work on the principles of Christianity, which has been recently published in our language, translated from the German, under the immediate patronage of an august Personage, for the avowed purpose of benefit to her illustrious daughters, as it is an event highly auspicious to the general interests of religion, so is it a circumstance very encouraging to the present undertaking.

It is impossible to write on such points as are discussed in this little work, without being led to draw a comparison between
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the lot of a British subject, and that of one who treats on similar topics under a despotic government.—The excellent Archbishop of Cambray, with every advantage which genius, learning, profession, and situation could confer; the admired preceptor of the Duke of Burgundy, appointed to the office by the King himself, was yet, in the beautiful work which he composed for the use of his Royal Pupil, driven to the necessity of couching his instructions under a fictitious narrative, and of sheltering behind the veil of fable, the duties of a just sovereign, and the blessings of a good government: he was aware, that even under this disguise, his delineation of both would too probably be construed into a satire on the personal errors of his own king, and the vices of the French government; and in spite of his ingenious discretion, the event justified his apprehensions.

Fortunate are the subjects of that free and happy country who are not driven to have recourse to any such expedients; who
may,

may, without danger, dare to express temperately what they think lawfully ; who, in describing the most perfect form of government, instead of recurring to poetic invention, need only delineate that under which they themselves live ; who, in sketching the character, and shadowing out the duties of a patriot King, have no occasion to turn their eyes from their own country to the thrones of Ithaca or Salentum.

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INTRO-

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

WE are told that when a sovereign of ancient times, who wished to be a mathematician, but was deterred by the difficulty of attainment, asked, whether he could not be instructed in some easier method; the answer which he received was, that there was no royal road to geometry.—The lesson contained in this reply ought never to be lost sight of, in that most important and delicate of all undertakings, the education of a prince.

It is a truth which might appear too obvious to require enforcing, and yet of all others it is a truth most liable to be practically forgotten, that the same subjugation of desire and will, of inclinations and tastes, to

the laws of reason and conscience, which every one wishes to see promoted in the lowest ranks of society, is still more necessary in the very highest, in order to the attainment either of individual happiness, or of general virtue, to public usefulness, or to private self-enjoyment.

Where a prince, therefore, is to be educated, his own welfare no less than that of his people, humanity no less than policy, prescribe, that the claims and privileges of the rational being should not be suffered to merge in the peculiar rights or exemptions of the expectant sovereign. If, in such cases, the wants and weaknesses of human nature could indeed be wholly effaced, as easily as they are kept out of sight, there would at least be some reasonable plea against the charge of cruelty. But when, on the contrary, the most elevated monarch must still retain every natural hope and fear, every affection and passion of the heart, every frailty of the mind, and every weakness of the body, to
which

which the meanest subject is liable ; how exquisitely inhuman must it be to provide so sedulously for the extrinsic accident of transient greatness, as to blight the growth of substantial virtue, to dry up the fountains of mental and moral comfort, and, in short, to commit the ill-fated victim of such mismanagement to more, almost, than human dangers and difficulties, without even the common resources of the least favoured of mankind.

Yet, must not this be the unaggravated consequence of not accustoming the royal child to that salutary control which the corruption of our nature requires, as its indispensable and earliest corrective ? If those foolish desires, which in the great mass of mankind are providentially repressed by the want of means to gratify them, should, in the case of royalty, be thought warrantable, because every possible gratification is within reach, what would be the result, but the full-blown luxuriance of folly, vice, and misery ? The laws of human nature will

not bend to human greatness; and by these immutable laws it is determined, that happiness and virtue, virtue and self-command, self-command and early, habitual self-denial, should be joined together in an indissoluble bond of connection.

The first habit, therefore, to be formed in every human being, and still more in the offspring and heir of royalty, is that of patience, and even cheerfulness, under postponed and restricted gratification. And the first lesson to be taught is, that since self-command is so essential to all genuine virtue and real happiness, where others cannot restrain us, there, especially, we should restrain ourselves. That illustrious monarch, Gustavus Adolphus, was so deeply sensible of this truth, that when he was surprised by one of his officers in secret prayer in his tent, he said, "Persons of my rank are answerable to God alone for their actions: this gives the enemy of mankind a peculiar advantage over us; an advantage which can only be resisted

renewed by prayer, and reading the Scriptures."

As the mind opens, the universal truth of this principle may be exemplified in innumerable instances, by which it may be demonstrated, that man is a rational being only so far as he can thus command himself. That such a superiority to the passions is essential to all regular and steady performance of duty; and that true gratification is thus, and thus only insured, because, by him who thus habitually restrains himself, not only every lawful pleasure is most perfectly enjoyed, but every common blessing, for which the licentious voluptuary has lost all relish, becomes a source of the most genuine pleasure, a source of pleasure which is never exhausted, because such common blessings are never wholly withheld.

The mind should be formed early, no later than the person: and for the same reason. Providence has plainly indicated childhood to be the season of instruction, by commu-

nicating at that period, such flexibility to the organs, such retention to the memory, such quickness to the apprehension, such inquisitiveness to the temper, such alacrity to the animal spirits, and such impressibility to the affections, as are not possessed at any subsequent period. We are therefore bound by every tie of duty to follow these obvious designations of Providence, by moulding that flexibility to the most durable ends; by storing that memory with the richest knowledge; by pointing that apprehension to the highest objects; by giving to that alacrity its best direction; by turning that inquisitiveness to the noblest intellectual purposes; and, above all, by converting that impressibility of heart to the most exalted moral uses.

If this be true in general, much more forcibly does it apply to the education of princes! Nothing short of the soundest, most rational, and, let me add, most religious education, can counteract the dangers to which they are exposed. If the highest of our nobility, in default of some better way

way of guarding against the mischiefs of flatterers and dependents, deem it expedient to commit their sons to the wholesome equality of a public school, in order to repress their aspiring notions, and check the tendencies of their birth ; — if they find it necessary to counteract the pernicious influence of domestic luxury, and the corrupting softness of domestic indulgence, by severity of study and closeness of application ; how much more indispensable is the spirit of this principle in the instance before us ? The highest nobility have their equals, their competitors, and even their superiors. Those who are born within the sphere of royalty are destitute of all such extrinsic means of correction, and must be wholly indebted for their safety to the soundness of their principles, and the rectitude of their habits. Unless, therefore, the brightest light of reason be, from the very first, thrown upon their path, and the divine energies of our holy religion, both restraining and attractive, be brought as early as possible to act upon

their feelings, the children of royalty, by the very fate of their birth, would be “ of all men most miserable.”

Let it not, however, be supposed, that any impracticable rigour is here recommended ; or that it is conceived to be necessary that the gay period of childhood should be rendered gloomy or painful, whether in the cottage or the palace. The virtue which is aimed at, is not that of the Stoic philosophy ; nor do the habits which are deemed valuable, require the harshness of a Spartan education. Let nature, truth, and reason, be consulted ; and, let the child, and especially the royal child, be, as much as possible, trained according to their simple and consistent indications. The attention, in such instances as the present, should be the more watchful and unremitting, as counteracting influences are, in so exalted a station, necessarily multiplied ; and every difficulty is at its greatest possible height. In a word, let not common sense, which is universal and eternal, be sacrificed to the
capricious

capricious tastes of the child, or to the pliant principles of any who may approach her. But let the virtue and the happiness of the royal pupil be as simply, as feelingly, and as uniformly consulted, as if she were the daughter of a private gentleman. May this attention to her moral and mental cultivation be the supreme concern, from honest reverence to the offspring of such a race, from a dutiful regard to her own future happiness, and from reasonable attention to the well-being of those millions, whose earthly fate may be at this moment suspended on lessons, and habits, received by one providentially distinguished female !

CHAP. II.

On the Acquisition of Knowledge.

THE course of instruction for the Princess will, doubtless, be wisely adapted, not only to the duties, but to the dangers of her rank. The probability of her having one day functions to discharge, which, in such exempt cases only, fall to the lot of females, obviously suggests the expediency of an education not only superior to, but in certain respects, distinct from, that of other women. What was formerly deemed necessary in an instance of this nature, may be inferred from the well-known attainments of the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey; and still more from the no less splendid acquirements of Queen Elizabeth. Of the erudition of the latter, we have a particular account from one, who was the fittest in that age to appreciate it, the celebrated Roger Ascham. He tells
us,

us, that when he read over with her the orations of Eschines and Demosthenes in Greek, she not only understood, at first sight, the full force and propriety of the language, and the meaning of the orators, but that she comprehended the whole scheme of the laws, customs, and manners of the Athenians. She possessed an exact and accurate knowledge of the Scriptures, and had committed to memory most of the striking passages in them. She had also learned by heart many of the finest parts of Thucydides and Xenophon, especially those which relate to life and manners. Thus were her early years sedulously employed in laying in a large stock of materials for governing well. To what purpose she improved them, let her illustrious reign of forty-five years declare !

If the influence of her erudition on her subsequent prosperity should be questioned ; let it be considered, that her intellectual attainments supported the dignity of her character, under foibles and feminine weaknesses,

nesses, which would otherwise have sunk her credit : she had even address enough to contrive to give to those weaknesses a certain classic grace. Let it be considered also, that whatever tended to raise her mind to a level with those whose services she was to use, and of whose counsels she was to avail herself, proportionably contributed to that mutual respect and confidence between the queen and her ministers, without which, the results of her government could not have been equally successful. Almost every man of rank was then a man of letters, and literature was valued accordingly. Had, therefore, deficiency of learning been added to inferiority of sex, we might not at this day have the reign of Elizabeth on which to look back, as the period in which administrative energy seemed to attain the greatest possible perfection.

Yet, though an extended acquaintance with ancient authors will be necessary now, as it was then, in the education of a princefs ; a general knowledge of ancient languages,

guages, it is presumed, may be dispensed with. The Greek authors, at least, may doubtless be read with sufficient advantage through the medium of a translation; the spirit of the original being, perhaps, more transfusible into the English, than into any other modern tongue. But are there not many forcible reasons why the Latin language should not be equally omitted*? Besides the advantage of reading, in their original dress, the historians of that empire, the literature of Rome is peculiarly interesting, as being the most satisfactory medium through which the moderns can obtain an intimate knowledge of the ancient world. As the Latin itself is a modification of one of the Greek dialects, so the Roman philosophers and poets, having formed themselves,

* The royal father of the illustrious pupil is said to possess the princely accomplishment of a pure classical taste. Of his love for polite learning, the attention which he is paying to the recovery of certain of the lost works of some of the Roman authors, is an evidence.

as much as possible, on Grecian models, present to us the nearest possible transcripts of those masters whom they copy. Thus, by an acquaintance with the Latin language, we are brought into a kind of actual contact not only with the ancient world, but with that portion of it which, having the most direct and the fullest intercourse with the other parts, introduces us, in a manner the most informing and satisfactory, to classical and philosophical antiquity in general. But what is still more, the Latin tongue enables us for ourselves, without the intermediation of any interpreter, to examine all the particular circumstances in manners, intercourse, modes of thinking and speaking, of that period which Eternal Wisdom chose (probably because it was ever after to appear the most luminous in the whole retrospect of history) as fittest for the advent of the Messiah, and the bringing life and immortality to light by his gospel.

If to this may be added lesser yet not unimportant considerations, we would say, that

by the acquaintance which the Latin language would give her with the etymology of words, she will learn to be more accurate in her definitions, as well as more critically exact and elegant in the use of her own language; and her ability to manage it with gracefulness and vigour will be considerably increased*.

Of the modern languages, if the author dares hazard an opinion, the French and German seem the most necessary. The Italian appears less important, as those authors which seem more peculiarly to belong to her education, such as Davila, Guicciardin, and Beccaria, may be read either in French or English translations.

It is not to be supposed that a personage, under her peculiar circumstances, should

* Who does not consider as one of the most interesting passages of modern history, that which relates the effect produced by an eloquent Latin oration pronounced in a full assembly, by the late Empress Maria Theresa, in the bloom of her youth and beauty, so late as the year 1740? Antiquity produces nothing more touching of the kind.

have

have much time to spare for the acquisition of what are called the fine arts; nor, perhaps, is it to be desired. To acquire them in perfection, would steal away too large a portion of those precious hours which will barely suffice to lay in the various rudiments of indispensable knowledge; and, in this fastidious age, whatever falls far short of perfection, is deemed of little worth. A moderate skill in music, for instance, would probably have little other effect, than to make the listeners feel, as Farinelli is said to have done, who used to complain heavily that the pension of 2000*l.* a year, which he had from the King of Spain, was compensation little enough for his being sometimes obliged to hear His Majesty play. Yet this would be a far less evil than that to which *excellence* might lead. We can think of few things more to be deprecated, than that those who have the greatest concerns to pursue, should have their tastes engaged, perhaps monopolized, by trifles. A listener to the royal music, if possessed of either
wisdom

wisdom or virtue, could not but feel his pleasure at the most exquisite performance abated, by the apprehension that this perfection implied the neglect of matters far more essential.

Besides, to excel in those arts, which, though merely ornamental, are yet well enough adapted to ladies who have only a subordinate part to fill in life, would rather lessen than augment the dignity of a sovereign. It was a truly royal reply of Themistocles, when he was asked if he could play on the lute—"No, but if you will give me a paltry village, I may perhaps know how to improve it into a great city."

These are imperial arts, and worthy kings.

As to these inferior accomplishments, is it not desirable, and is it not sufficient that a sovereign should possess that general knowledge and taste which give the power of discriminating excellence, so as judiciously to cherish, and liberally to reward it?

But, not only in works of mere taste ; even in natural history, botany, experimental philosophy, and other generally valuable sciences, a correct but unlaboured outline of knowledge, it is presumed, will, in the present instance, be thought sufficient. Profitable and delightful as these pursuits are to others (and no one more admires them than the writer of this essay), yet the royal personage must not be examining plants, when she should be studying laws ; nor investigating the instincts of animals, when she should be analyzing the characters of men. The time so properly devoted to these studies in other educations, will be little enough in this, to attain that knowledge of general history, and especially that accurate acquaintance with the events of our own country, which, in her situation, are absolutely indispensable.

Geography and chronology have not unfitly been termed the two eyes of history. With chronology she should be competently acquainted. It is little to know events,
if

if we do not know in what order and succession they are disposed. It is necessary also to learn how the periods of computation are determined. Method does not merely aid the memory, it also assists the judgment, by settling the dependance of one event upon another. Chronology is the grand art of historical arrangement. To know that a man of distinguished eminence has lived, is to know little, unless we know when he lived, and who were his contemporaries. Indistinctness and confusion must always perplex that understanding, in which the annals of past ages are not thus consecutively linked together.

Would it not be proper always to read history with a map, in order to keep up in the mind the indissoluble connection between history and geography ; and that a glance of the country may recal the exploits of the hero, or the virtues of the patriot who has immortalized it ?

Respecting the study of geography, I would observe, that many particulars, which

do not seem to have been considered by the generality of writers, ought to be brought before the view of a royal pupil. The effects of local situation, and geographical boundary, on the formation and progress of nations and empires. — The consequences, for example, which have resulted as well in the political, as in the civil and religious circumstances of mankind, from the Mediterranean being so aptly interposed, not so much as it should seem, to be a common barrier, as to form a most convenient and important medium of intercourse between Europe, Asia, and Africa. — The effect of this great *Naumachia* of the ancient world, in transferring empire from east to west; — the want of tides in the Mediterranean, so as to adapt this scene of early maritime adventure to the rudeness of those who were first to navigate it, and whose success might have been fatally impeded, by that diversity of currents, which in other seas the ebb and flow of the tides is perpetually creating.

In connection with this, though somewhat locally remote from it, is to be remarked the regularity of the monsoons in the Erythræan sea, by means of which, the earlier traders between Africa and India were carried across the Persian gulph, without the exercise of that skill, which as yet did not exist.—And, as if to facilitate the conveyance of those most interesting commodities to the Mediterranean, in order that the commerce of that inland ocean might never want an adequate stimulus, the Red Sea is carried onward, till it is separated from the Mediterranean by a comparatively narrow isthmus; an isthmus that seems providentially to have been retained, that while the maritime activity and general convenience of the ancient world was provided for, there might still be sufficient difficulty in the way, to excite to a more extended circumnavigation, when the invention of the compass, the improvement of maritime skill, and the general progress of human society,

should concur in bringing on the proper season.

And, in this geographic sketch, let not the remarkable position of Judea be forgotten* ; placed in the very middle parts

* It is worthy of notice, that in all probability Judea was the country by means of which a trade was first opened between the Mediterranean and India. David had taken from the Edomites two cities at the Red Sea, *Ezion-Geber* and *Eloth* ; these, we are told, Solomon made sea-ports, and colonized them with navigators, furnished by the King of Tyre, of whom it is said, 2 Chron. viii. 18. that he sent unto Solomon ships and servants who had knowledge of the sea, and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir ; and, 1 Kings, x. 22. we are told that Solomon had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram, which came once in three years, bringing gold and silver, ivory, apes and peacocks. Thus, Tyre, the great Emporium of the Mediterranean, was evidently indebted to David and Solomon, for access to that commerce of the east, which was carried on by means of the Red Sea, and brought from the above-mentioned ports, across the isthmus of Suez, probably to the same place where the Tyrians in later times unshipped their Asiatic commodities, the port of Rhinocorura.

of

of the old world, (whose extent may be reckoned from the pillars of Hercules to “the utmost Indian isle Tabrobane,”) as the sun in the centre of the solar system, and at the top of the Mediterranean, both that it might be within the vortex of great events, and also that when the fullness of time should come, it might be most conveniently situated for pouring forth that light of truth, of which it was destined to be the local origin, upon all the nations of the earth, and especially on the Roman empire.—Such are the less common particulars to which attention may advantageously be drawn. With geography in general should of course be connected some knowledge of the natural and civil history of each country: its chief political revolutions, its alliances, and dependencies; together with the state of its arts, commerce, natural productions, government, and religion.

CHAP. III.

On the Importance of forming the Mind.

IT is of the highest importance that the royal pupil should acquire an early habit of method and regularity in her studies. She should, therefore, be particularly guarded against that desultory manner of reading, too common at this day, and particularly with women. She should be trained always to study to some valuable purpose, and carefully to attend to the several way-marks, by means of which that end may most effectually be attained. She should be accustomed to call forth the forces of her mind, and to keep them alert, well-disciplined, and ready for service. She should so cultivate settled principles of action, as to acquire the habit of applying them, on demand, to the actual occasions of life; and should possess a promptitude, as well as soundness, in deducing consequences,
and

and drawing conclusions. Her mind should be exercised with as much industry in the pursuit of moral truth and useful knowledge, as that of a young academic in the studies of his profession. The art of reigning is the profession of a prince. And, doubtless, it is a science which requires at least as much preparatory study as any other. Besides, one part of knowledge is often so necessary for reflecting light on another part, that perhaps no one who does not understand many things, can understand any thing well.

But, whatever may be the necessary degree of knowledge, it is most certain that it cannot be attained amidst the petty avocations which occupy a modern lady's time. Knowledge will not come by nature or by chance. Precepts do not always convey it. Talents do not always insure it. It is the fruit of pains. It is the reward of application.

Dii laboribus omnia vendunt.

Let her ever bear in mind, *she is not to study that she may become learned, but that she may*

may become wise. It is by such an acquisition of knowledge as is here recommended, that her mind must be so enlarged and invigorated as to prepare her for following wise counsels, without blindly yielding to fortuitous suggestions; as to enable her to trace actions into their multifarious consequences, and to discover real analogies without being deceived by superficial appearances of resemblance. It is thus that she must be secured from the dominion of the less enlightened. This will preserve her from credulity; prevent her from over-rating inferior talents, and help her to attain that *nil admirari*, which is so necessary for distinguishing arrogant pretension from substantial merit. It will aid her to appreciate the value of those around her; will assist her penetration in what regards her friends; preserve her from a blind prejudice in choosing them, from retaining them through fear or fondness, and from changing them through weakness or caprice. “When we are abused through specious appearances,”
says

says the judicious Hooker, “ it is because reason is negligent to search out the fallacy.” But, he might have added, if reason be not cultivated early, if it be not exercised constantly, it will have no eye for discernment, no heart for vigorous exertion. Specious appearances will perpetually deceive that mind which has been accustomed to acquiesce in them through ignorance, blindness, and inaction.

A prince should be ignorant of nothing which it is honourable to know; but he should look on mere acquisition of knowledge not as the end to be rested in, but only as the means of arriving at some higher end. He may have been well instructed in history, belles lettres, philosophy, and languages, and yet have received a defective education, if the formation of his judgment has been neglected. For, it is not so important to know every thing, as to know the exact value of every thing, to appreciate what we learn, and to arrange what we know.

Books alone will never form the character.

ter. Mere reading would rather tend to make a pedantic, than an accomplished prince. It is *conversation* which must unfold, enlarge, and apply the use of books. Without that familiar comment on what is read, which will make a most important part of the intercourse between a royal pupil and the society around him, mere reading might only fill the mind with fallacious models of character, and false maxims of life. It is *conversation* which must develop what is obscure, raise what is low, correct what is defective, qualify what is exaggerated, and gently and almost insensibly raise the understanding, form the heart, and fix the taste; and, by giving just proportions to the mind, teach it the power of fair appreciation, draw it to adopt what is reasonable, to love what is good, to taste what is pure, and to imitate what is elegant.

But this is not to be effected by cold rules, and formal reflections; by insipid dogmas, and tedious sermonizing. It should be done so indirectly, so discreetly, and so pleasantly,
that

that the pupil shall not be led to dread a lecture at every turn, nor a dissertation on every occurrence. While yet such an ingenious and cheerful turn may be given to subjects apparently unpromising, old truths may be conveyed by such new images, that the pupil will wonder to find herself improved when she thought she was only diverted. Folly may be made contemptible, affectation ridiculous, vice hateful, and virtue beautiful, by such seemingly unpremeditated means, as shall have the effect, without having the effort, of a lesson. Topics must not be so much proposed as insinuated.

But above all, there should be a constant, but imperceptible habit of turning the mind to a love of TRUTH in all its forms and aspects; not only in matters of grave morality, but in matters of business, of common intercourse, and even of taste; for there is a truth both in moral and mental taste, little short of the exactness of mathematical truth; and the mind should acquire an habit of seeking perfection in every thing.

thing. This habit should be so early and insensibly formed, that when the pupil comes afterwards to meet with maxims, and instances of truth and virtue, in historical and moral writings, she may bring to the perusal tastes, tempers, and dispositions so laid in, as to have prepared the mind for their reception. As this mode of preparatory and incidental instruction will be gradual and inwoven, so it will be deep and durable; but as it will be little obvious to ordinary judges, it will excite less wonder and admiration than the usual display and exhibition so prevalent in modern education. Its effects will be less ostensible, but they will be more certain.

When it is considered how short is that period of life in which plain unvarnished truth will be likely to appear in all its naked simplicity before princes, is there a moment of that happy, that auspicious season to be lost, for presenting it to them in all its lovely and engaging forms? It is not enough that they should possess truth as a

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principle,

principle, they should cherish it as an object of affection, delight in it as a matter of taste, and dread nothing so much as false colouring and artifice.

He who possesses a sound principle, and strong relish of truth in his own mind, will possess a touchstone by which to try this quality in others, and which will enable him to detect false notions, to see through false manners, and to despise false attractions. This discerning faculty is the more important, as the high breeding of very polished society presents so plausible an imitation of goodness, as to impose on the superficial observer, who, satisfied with the image and superscription, never inquires whether the coin be counterfeit or sterling.

The early habit of sifting questions, turning about a truth, and examining an argument on all sides, will strengthen the intellectual powers of the royal pupil, prevent her thoughts from wandering, accustom her to weigh fairly and resolve soundly; will conquer irresolution in her mind; preserve

serve her from being easily deceived by false reasoning, startled by doubts, and confounded by objections. She will learn to digest her thoughts in an exact method, to acquire a logical order in the arrangement of them, to possess precision in her ideas, and its natural concomitant, perspicuity in her expression ; all which will be of the highest importance to one who may hereafter have so much to do and to say in public.

With the *shades* of expressions she should also be well acquainted, and be habituated to use the most apposite and the most correct ; such as are neither too high nor too low, too strong nor too weak, for the occasion ; such as are obvious, but not vulgar, accurate but not pedantic, elegant but not artificial.

The memory should be stored with none but the best things, that when, hereafter, the judgment is brought into exercise, it may find none but the best materials to act upon. Instead, therefore, of loading the memory, might it not be useful to establish it into a rule to read to her every day, as

an amusement, and distinctly from all regular instruction, a passage from the history of England, a story out of Plutarch, or any similar author ; and require of her to repeat it afterwards, in her own words? This would not only add, daily, one important fact to her stock of knowledge, but would tend to form a perspicuous and elegant style. Occasion would also be furnished for observing whether she exhibited that best proof of good sense, the seizing on the prominent features of the story, laying less stress on what was less important.

But while accuracy is thus sought, the still more important habit of comprehensiveness must not be overlooked. Her mind should be trained to embrace a wide compass ; it should be taught to take in a large whole, and then subdivide it into parts ; each of which should be considered distinctly, yet connectedly, with strict attention to its due proportions, relative situations, its bearings with respect to the others, and the dependence of each part on the whole.

Where, however, so many things are to be known, and so many to be done, it is impossible to attend equally to all. It is therefore important, that, in any case of competition, the less material be left unlearned and undone; and that petty details never fill the time and mind, at the expence of neglecting great objects.

For those, therefore, who have much business and little time, it is a great and necessary art to learn to extract the essential spirit of an author from the body of his work; to know how to seize on the vital parts; to discern where his strength lies; and to separate it from those portions of the work which are superfluous, collateral, or merely ornamental.

On the subject of economising time, the writer would have been fearful of incurring the charge of needless strictness, by suggesting the utility of accustoming princes to be read to while they are dressing, could not the actual practice of our admirable Queen Mary be adduced to sanction the advice.

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That excellent princess, from a conscientious regard to the value of time, was either read to by others, or condescended, herself, to read aloud, that those who were employed about her person might share the benefit, which she enhanced by such pleasant and judicious remarks as the subject suggested. But there is an additional reason why the *children* of the great would be benefited by this habit; for it would not only turn idle moments to some account, but would be of use in another way, by cutting off the fairest occasions which their inferior attendants can have for engaging them, by frivolous or flattering discourse.

It would be well to watch attentively the bent of the mind in the hours of relaxation and amusement, when caution is dismissed by the pupil, and control by the preceptor; when no studies are imposed, and no specific employment suggested. In fact, when vigilance appears to sleep, it should be particularly on the alert, in order to discern those tendencies and dispositions which

will then most naturally unfold themselves ; and because that the heart, being at those seasons less under discipline, will be more likely to betray its native character. And as the regulation of the temper is that part of education on which the whole happiness of life most materially depends, no occasion should be neglected, no indication slighted, no counteraction omitted, which may contribute to accomplish so important an end.

The peculiar defects, not merely such faults as are incident to childhood, but the predominating faults of the individual, should be carefully watched, lest they acquire strength through neglect, when they might have been diminished by a counteracting force. If the temper be restless, ardent, and impetuous, weariness and discontent will, hereafter, fill up the dreary intervals between one animating scene and another, unless the temper be subdued and tranquillized by a constant habit of quiet, though varied, and interesting occupation. Few things are more fatal to the mind, than to depend for happiness

on the contingent recurrence of events, businesſes, and diverſions, which inflame and agitate it; for as they do not often occur, the intervals which are long are alſo languid; the enjoyment is factitious happineſs; the privation is actual miſery.

Reading, therefore, has, eſpecially to a prince, its moral uſes, independently of the nature of the ſtudy itſelf. It brings no ſmall gain, if it ſecure him from the dominion of turbulent purſuits and agitating pleaſures. If it ſnatch him, on the one hand, from public ſchemes of ambition and falſe glory; and if it reſcue him, on the other, from the habit of forming petty projects of inceſſant diverſion, the rudiments of a trifling and uſeleſs life.

Knowledge, therefore, is often the preſervative of virtue; and, next to right habits of ſentiment and conduct, the beſt human ſource of happineſs. Could Louis the Fourteenth have *read*, probably the edict of Nantz had not been revoked. But a reſtleſs temper, and a vacant mind, unhappily

lighting on absolute power, present, in this monarch, a striking instance of the fatal effects of ignorance, and the calamity of a neglected education. He had a good natural understanding, loved business, and seemed to have a mind capable of comprehending it. Many of his recorded expressions are neat and elegant. But he was uninstructed upon system; Cardinal Mazarine, with a view to secure his own dominion, having withheld from him all the necessary means of education. Thus, he had received no ideas from books; he even hated in others the learning which he did not himself possess: the terms *wit* and *scholar*, were, in his mind, terms of reproach; the one as implying satire, the other pedantry. He wanted not application to public affairs; and habit had given him some experience in them. But the apathy which marked his latter years strongly illustrated the infelicity of an unfurnished mind. This, in the tumult of his brighter days, amidst the succession of intrigues,
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the splendour of festivity, and the bustle of arms, was scarcely felt. But ambition and voluptuousness cannot always be gratified. Those ardent passions, which in youth were devoted to licentiousness, in the meridian of life to war, in a more advanced age to bigotry and intolerance, not only had never been directed by religion, but had never been softened by letters. After he had renounced his mistresses at home, and his unjust wars abroad, even though his mind seems to have acquired some pious tendencies, his life became a scene of such inanity and restlessness, that he was impatient at being, for a moment, left alone. He had no intellectual resources. The agitation of great events had subsided. From never having learned either to employ himself in reading or thinking, his life became a blank, from which he could not be relieved by the sight of his palaces, his gardens, and his aqueducts, the purchase of depopulated villages and plundered cities.

Indigent amid all his possessions, he exhibited a striking confirmation of the declaration of Solomon, concerning the unsatisfying nature of all earthly pleasures; and shewed, that it is in vain even for kings to hope to obtain from others those comforts, and that contentment, which man can derive only from within himself.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Education of a Sovereign a specific Education.

THE formation of the character is the grand object to be accomplished. This should be considered to be not so much a separate business, as a sort of centre to which all the rays of instruction should be directed. All the studies, it is presumed, of the royal pupil, should have some reference to her probable future situation. Is it not, therefore, obviously requisite that her understanding be exercised in a wider range than that of others of her sex; and that her principles be so established, on the best and surest foundation, as to fit her at once for fulfilling the peculiar demands, and for resisting the peculiar temptations of her station? Princes have been too often inclined to fancy, that they have few interests in common with the rest of mankind, feeling them-

themselves placed by Providence on an eminence so much above them. But the great aim should be, to correct the haughtiness which may attend this superiority, without relinquishing the truth of the fact. Is it not, therefore, the business of those who have the care of a royal education, not so much to deny the reality of this distance, or to diminish its amount, as to account for its existence, and point out the uses to which it is subservient?

A prince is an individual being, whom the hand of Providence has placed on a pedestal of peculiar elevation: but he should learn, that he is placed there as the minister of good to others; that the dignity being hereditary, he is the more manifestly raised to that elevation, not by his own merit, but by providential destination; by those laws, which he is himself bound to observe with the same religious fidelity as the meanest of his subjects. It ought early to be impressed, that those appendages of royalty, with which human weakness may too probably be fascinated, are intended not to gratify the feelings,

feelings, but to distinguish the person of the monarch ; that, in themselves, they are of little value ; that they are beneath the attachment of a rational, and of no substantial use to a moral being ; in short, that they are not a subject of triumph, but are to be acquiesced in for the public benefit, and from regard to that weakness of our nature, which subjects so large a portion of every community to the influence of their imagination, and their senses.

While, therefore, a prince is taught the use of those exterior embellishments, which, as was before observed, designate, rather than dignify his station ; while he is led to place the just value on every appendage which may contribute to give him importance in the eyes of the multitude ; who, not being just judges of what constitutes true dignity, are consequently apt to reverence the royal person exactly so far as they see outward splendour connected with it ; should not a royal pupil himself be taught, instead of overvaluing that splendour,

dour, to think it a humbling, rather than an elevating consideration, that so large a part of the respect paid to him, should be owing to such extrinsic causes, to causes which make no part of himself? Let him then be taught to gratify the public with all the pomp and circumstance suitable to royalty; but let him never forget, that though his station ought always to procure for him respect, he must ever look to his own personal conduct, for inspiring veneration, attachment, and affection; and ever let it be remembered that this affection is the strongest tie of obedience; that subjects like to see their prince great, when that greatness is not produced by rendering them less; and as the profound Selden observes, “the people will always be liberal to a prince who spares them, and a good prince will always spare a liberal people.”

This is not a period when any wise man would wish to diminish either the authority, or the splendour of kings. So far from it,
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he will support with his whole weight, an institution which the licentious fury of a revolutionary spirit has rendered more dear to every Englishman. On no consideration, therefore, would he pluck even a feather from those decorations of royalty, which, by a long association, have become intimately connected with its substance. In short, every wise inhabitant of the British Isles must feel, that he who would despoil the crown of its jewels, would not be far from spoiling the wearer of his crown. And as nothing but democratic folly or phrenzy would degrade the monarch from his due elevation, so democratic envy alone would wish to strip him, not only of a single constituent of real greatness, but even of a single ornamental appendage, on which the people have been accustomed to gaze with honest joy.

Nevertheless, those outrages which have lately been committed against the sanctity of the throne, furnish new and most powerful reasons for assiduously guard-
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ing princes by every respectful admonition, against any tendency to exceed their just prerogatives, and for checking every rising propensity to overstep, in the slightest degree, their well-defined rights.

At the same time it should be remembered, that there may be no less dangerous faults on the other side, and that want of firmness in maintaining just rights, or of spirit in the prompt and vigorous exercise of necessary authority, may prove as injurious to the interests of a community as the most lawless stretch of power. Defects of this very kind were evidently among the causes of bringing down, on the gentlest of the kings of France, more calamities than had ever resulted from the most arbitrary exertion of power in any of his predecessors. Feebleness and irresolution, which seem to be little more than pardonable weaknesses in private persons, may, by their consequences, prove in princes fatal errors; and even produce the effect of great crimes. Vigour to
secure,

secure, and opportunely to exert their constitutional power, is as essential as moderation not to exceed it *.

It serves to shew the inestimable value of well-defined laws, and the importance of making the prince acquainted with them, that Louis the Thirteenth conceived a jealousy respecting his own power, because he did not understand the nature of it; and his favourites were unable or unwilling to

* May it not be observed, without risking the imputation of flattery, that perhaps never, in the history of the world, has any country been so uninterruptedly blessed with that very temperament of government, which is here implied, as this empire has been, under the dominion of the House of Hanover? There has, on no occasion, been a want of firmness: but with that firmness, there has been a conscientious regard to the principles of the constitution. Who can at this moment pretend to pronounce how much we owe to the steady integrity which is so obviously possessed by our present sovereign? And who does not remember with what good effects his resolute composure and dignified firmness were exerted, during a scene of the greatest alarm which has occurred in his reign—the riots of the year 1781.

instruct

instruct him. But his usurpation of extraordinary power tended to exalt his minister still more than himself; and in setting the King above the laws, he still set the Cardinal above the King.

The power of the monarchs of France had never been defined by any written law. Charles V., Louis IX., and perhaps a very few other wise and temperate princes, did not conceive their power to be above the laws, but approved of those moderating maxims which had become, by degrees, the received usages of the state, and which, while they seemed, in some measure, a constitutional check upon the absolute power of the crown, formed also a guard against that popular licentiousness, which, in a pure despotism, appears to be the only resource left to the people. But France has had few monarchs like Charles V. and still fewer like Louis IX. Henry IV. seems to have found and observed the happy medium. He was at once resolute and mild; determined and affectionate; politic and humane

humane. The firmness of his mind, and the active vigour of his conduct, always kept pace with the gentleness of his language. He fought for his prerogatives bravely, and defended them vigorously; yet, it is said, he ever carefully avoided the use of the term. He also loved and sought popularity, but he never sacrificed to it any just claim, nor ever made a concession which did not also tend to guard the real prerogatives of the crown*. And it seems to be the true wisdom of a prince, that, as he cannot be too deliberate in his councils, nor too cautious in his plans, so when those counsels are well matured, and those plans well digested, he cannot be too decisive in their execution.

It was not, indeed, under the actual rule of monarchs, however arbitrary, that royal authority was raised to its highest pitch in France. It was Richelieu, who, under a regency, rapidly established such a

* Il ne se defioit pas des loix, parcequ'il se fioit en lui meme.

DE RETZ.

system of tyranny, as the boldest sovereign had seldom dared to attempt. He improved on all the anterior corruptions; and, as a lively French author says, tried to conceal their being corruptions, by erecting them into political maxims. Mazarin, with inferior ability, which would not have enabled him to *give* the impulse, attempted still more to accelerate the movement of that machine which his predecessor had set a-going with such velocity; and a civil war was the consequence.

Happily, the examples of neither the kings, the laws, nor the constitution of France, can be strictly applicable to us. Happily also, we live at a time, when genuine freedom is so completely established among us; when the constitution, powers, and privileges of parliament are so firmly settled; the limits of the royal prerogative so exactly defined, and so fully understood; and the mild, moderate, and equitable spirit of the illustrious family in which it is invested, is withal so conspicuous, that, as

Blackstone

Blackstone observes, “ topics of government, which, like the mysteries of the Bona Dea, were formerly thought too sacred to be divulged to any but the initiated, may now, without the smallest offence, be fully and temperately discussed.”

At this tumultuous period, when we have seen almost all the thrones of Christendom trembling to their foundation; we have witnessed the British constitution, like the British oak, confirmed and rooted by the shaking of that tremendous blast, which has stripped kingdoms of their crowns, levelled the fences and inclosures of law, laid waste the best earthly blessings of mankind, and involved in desolation a large part of the civilized world. When we have beheld absolute monarchies, and republican states, alike ravaged by the tempest, shall we not learn still more highly to prize our own unparalleled political edifice, built with such fair proportions, on principles so harmonious and so just, that one part affords to another that support which, in its turn, it

receives ; while each lends strength, as well as stability to all ?

How slender is the security of unlimited power, let the ephemeral reigns of eastern despots declare ! A prince who governs a free people, enjoys a safety which no despotic sovereign ever possessed. The latter rules singly ; and where a revolution is meditated, the change of a single person is soon effected. But where a sovereign's power is incorporated with the powers of parliament, and the will of the people who elect parliaments, the kingly state is fenced in with, and intrenched by, the other states. He relies not solely upon an army. He relies on his parliament, and on his people,—a sure resource, while he involves his interests with theirs ! This is the happiness, the beauty, and the strength of that three-fold bond which ties our constitution together. Counsellors may mislead, favourites may betray, even armies may desert, and navies may mutiny, but LAWS, as they are the surest guides of action, so are they the surest guards from danger.

Well

Well might the view of this well-founded power produce the remark which it drew forth from a sagacious Frenchman *, who was comparing the solid constitutional authority of the British monarch, with the more specious but less secure fabric of the despotism of the kings of France—"That a King of England, who acted according to the laws, was the greatest of all monarchs!"

But while the convulsions of other governments, built on less permanent principles, have rivetted our affection to our own; and while an experimental acquaintance with the miseries of anarchy most naturally lead us, as subjects, to a strong sense of the duty of obedience:—with equal zeal would we wish it to be inculcated on princes, that they should be cautious never to multiply occasions for exacting that obedience; that they should use no unnecessary compulsion by seizing as a debt what good subjects are always willing to pay as a duty;

* Gourville.

and what is then only to be relied upon, when it is spontaneous and cordial.

It is observable, that those monarchs who have most sedulously contended for prerogative, have been among the feeblest and the least capable of exercising it; and that those who have struggled most earnestly for unjust power, have seldom enjoyed it themselves, but have made it over to mistresses and favourites. This is particularly exemplified in two of our weakest and most unhappy princes, Edward II. and Richard II. Whether it was that this very imbecility made them more contentious about their prerogative, and more obstinate in resisting the demands of parliament; or that their favourites stimulated them to exactions, the benefit of which was to be transferred to themselves. The character of Edward III. (notwithstanding his faults) was consistently magnanimous. He was not more brave than just. He was attentive to the dignity of his crown in proportion to that magnanimity, and to the creation and execution of laws

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in proportion to that justice ; and he took no important steps without the advice of parliament. The wretched reign and miserable catastrophe of each of the two-first-named princes, furnish a striking contrast to the energy and popularity of the last ; of whom Hume observes, “ that his domestic government was even more admirable than his foreign conquests ;” and of whom Selden says, “ that one would think by his actions that he never was at home, and by his laws that he never was abroad.”

A wise and virtuous prince will ever bear in mind the grand distinction between his own situation and that of his minister. The latter is but the precarious possessor of a transient authority ; a mere tenant at will, or, at most, for life. He himself is the hereditary and permanent possessor of the property. The former may be more tempted to adopt measures which, though gainful or gratifying at the present, will be probably productive of future mischief to the estate. But surely the latter may be justly expected to

take a longer and wider view ; and, considering the interests of his posterity no less than his own, to reject all measures which are likely to disparage their inheritance, or injure their tenure. He will trace the misfortunes of our first Charles to the usurpation of the Tudors ; and mark but too natural a connection between the unprincipled domination and profuse magnificence of Louis XIV. and the melancholy fate of his far better and more amiable successor. He will remember the solid answer of the Spartan king, who being reproached by a superficial observer with having left the regal power impaired to his posterity, replied, “ No ; for he had left it more *secure*, therefore more *permanent*.” A large and just conception of interest, therefore, no less than of duty, will prompt a wise prince to reject all measures which, while they appear to flatter the love of dominion, naturally inherent in the mind of man, by holding forth the present extension of his power, yet tend obstinately to weaken its essential strength ;

strength ; to make his authority the object of his people's jealousy, rather than of their affection ; to cause it to rest on the uncertain basis of military power, rather than on the deep and durable foundations of the constitution.

- In order to enable him the better, therefore, to know the true nature and limits of his authority, he will endeavour to develop the constitutional foundations on which it rests. Sovereigns, even female sovereigns, though they cannot have leisure to become fully acquainted with the vast mass of our laws, ought at least to imbibe the spirit of them. If they be not early taught the general principles of our laws and constitution, they may be liable, from the flatterers to whom they may be exposed, to hear of nothing but the power which they may exert, or the influence which they may exercise, without having their attention directed to those counteracting principles, which, in a limited monarchy like ours, serve,

serve, in numberless ways, to balance and restrain that power.

It should be worked into a principle in the mind, that it is in consideration of the duties which the laws impose on a prince, that those laws have secured to him either dignity or prerogative; it being a maxim of the law, that protection and allegiance are reciprocal. With the impresson of the power, the splendour, and the dignity of royalty, the ideas of trust, duty, and responsibility, should be inseparably interwoven. It should be assiduouſly inculcated, that the LAWS form the very basis of the throne; the root and ground-work of the monarch's political existence. One peculiar reason why a prince ought to know so much of the laws and constitution, as to be able to determine what is, and what is not, an infringement of them, is, that he may be quick-sighted to the slightest approximation of ministers towards any such encroachments. A farther reason is, that by studying the laws and consti,

constitution of the country, he may become more firmly attached to them, not merely by national instinct, and fond prejudice, because they are his *own*, but from judgment, reason, knowledge, discrimination, preference, habit, obligation, —— in a word, because they are the *best*.

But as this superficial sketch proposes not to be an essay on political, but moral instruction, these remarks are only hazarded, in order to intimate the peculiar turn which the royal education ought to take. If a sovereign of England be, in such a variety of respects, supreme, it follows, not only that his education should be liberal, large, and general, but that it should, moreover, be directed to a knowledge of those departments in which he will be called to preside.

As supreme magistrate and the source of all judicial power, he should be adequately acquainted, not only with the law of nature and of nations, but particularly with the law of England. As possessing the
power

power of declaring war, and contracting alliances, he should be thoroughly conversant with those authors who, with the soundest judgment, the deepest moral views, and the most correct precision, treat of the great principles of political justice; who best unfold the rights of human nature, and the mischiefs of unjust ambition. He should be competently acquainted with the present state of the different governments of Europe, with which that of Great Britain may have any political relation; and he should be led to exercise that intuitive discernment of character and talents, which will enable him to decide on the choice of ambassadors, and other foreign ministers, whom it is his prerogative to appoint.

As he is the fountain of honour, from which proceed titles, distinctions, and offices, he should be early accustomed to combine a due attention to character, with the examination of claims, and the appreciation of services; in order that the honours of the
subject

subject may reflect no dishonour on the prince. Those whose distinguished lot it is to bestow subordinate offices and inferior dignities, should evince, by the judgment with which they confer them, how fit they themselves are to discharge the highest.

Is he supreme head of the church? Hence arises a strong obligation to be acquainted with ecclesiastical history in general, as well as with the history of the church of England in particular. He should learn, not merely from habit and prescription, but from an attentive comparison of our national church with other ecclesiastical institutions, to discern both the distinguishing characters and appropriate advantages of our church establishment. He ought to inquire in what manner its interests are interwoven with those of the state, so far as to be inseparable from them. He should learn, that from the supreme power, with which the laws invest him over the church, arises a most awful responsibility, especially in the grand prerogative of bestowing the higher ecclesiastical appoint-

appointments, — a trust which involves consequences far too extensive for human minds to calculate; and which a sovereign, even amid all the dazzling splendour of royalty, while he preserves tenderness of conscience, and quickness of sensibility, will not reflect on without trepidation. While history offers numberless instances of the abuse of this power, it records numberless striking examples of its proper application. It even presents some, in which good sense has operated usefully in the absence of all principle. When a profligate ecclesiastic applied for preferment to the profligate Duke of Orleans, while regent of France, urging as a motive, that he should be dishonoured if the duke did not make him a bishop — “And I,” replied the regent, “shall be dishonoured if I do.”

CHAP. V.

On the Importance of studying Ancient History.

THOSE pious persons do not seem to understand the true interests of Christianity, who forbid the study of Pagan literature. That it is of little value, comparatively with Christian learning, does not prove it to be altogether without its usefulness. In the present period of critical investigation, heathen learning seems to be justly appreciated, in the scale of letters; the wisdom and piety of some of our most eminent contemporaries having successfully applied it to its noblest office, by rendering it subservient to the purposes of Revelation, in multiplying the evidences, and illustrating the proofs. Thus the Christian emperor, when he destroyed the heathen temples, consecrated the golden vessels, to adorn the Christian churches.

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In this enlightened period, religion, our religion at least, does not, as in her days of darkness, feel it necessary to degrade human learning, in order to withdraw herself from scrutiny. The time is past, when it was produced as a serious charge against Saint Jerome, that he had read Homer; when a doctor of the Sorbonne penitently confessed, among his other sins, that the exquisite muse of Virgil had made him weep for the woes of Dido; and when the works of Tacitus were condemned to the flames, from the Papal chair, because the author was not a Roman Catholic. It is also curious to observe a papist persecuting the memory of a Pagan, on the ground of his *superstition*! Pope Gregory the Great expelled Livy from every Christian library on this account!

The most acute enemy of Christianity, the Emperor Julian, who had himself been bred a Christian and a scholar, well understood what was most likely to hurt its cause. He knew the use which the Chris-

tians were making of ancient authors, and of rhetoric, in order to refute error, and establish truth. — “ They fight us,” said he, “ by the knowledge of our own authors ; shall we suffer ourselves to be stabbed with our own swords ?” He actually made a law to interdict their reading Homer and Demosthenes ; prohibited to their schools the study of antiquity, and ordered that they should confine themselves, to the explanation of Matthew and Luke, in the churches of the Galileans.

It can never be too soon, for the royal pupil, to begin to collect materials for reflection, and for action. Her future character will much depend on the course of reading, the turn of temper, the habit of thought now acquired, and the standard of morals now fixed. The acquisition of present tastes will form the elements of her subsequent character. Her present acquirements, it is true, will need to be matured by her after-experience ; but experience will operate to comparatively little purpose,

where only a slender stock has been laid in for it to work upon; and where these materials for forming the character have not been previously prepared. Things must be known before they are done. The part should be studied before it is acted, if we expect to have it acted well.

Where much is to be learned, time must be œconomised; and in the judicious selection of Pagan literature, the discernment of the preceptor will be particularly exercised. — All those writers, however justly celebrated, who have employed much learning, in elaborating points which add little to the practical wisdom or virtue of mankind; all such as are rather curious than useful, or ingenious than instructive, should be passed over; nor need she bestow much attention on points, which, though they may have been accurately discussed, are not seriously important. Dry critical knowledge, though it may be correctly just; and mere chronicles of events, though they may be strictly true, teach not the things

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things she wants. Such authors as Sallust, who, in speaking of turbulent innovators, remarks, *that they thought the very disturbance of things established a sufficient bribe to set them at work*; those who, like this exquisite historian, unfold the internal principles of action, and dissect the hearts and minds of their personages, who develop complicated circumstances, furnish a clue to trace the labyrinth of causes and effects, and assign to every incident its proper motive, will be eminently useful. But, if she be taught to discern the merits of writers, it is that she may become not a critic in books, but in human nature.

History is the glass by which the royal mind should be dressed. If it be delightful for a private individual, to enter with the historian into every scene which he describes, and into every event which he relates; to be introduced into the interior of the Roman senate, or the Athenian Areopagus; to follow Pompey to Pharsalia, Miltiades to Marathon, or Marlborough to

Blenheim; how much more interesting will this be to a sovereign? To him for whom senates debate, for whom armies engage, and who is himself to be a prime actor in the drama! Of how much more importance is it to *him*, to possess an accurate knowledge of all the successive governments of that world, in a principal government of which he is one day to take the lead! To possess himself of the experience of ancient states, of the wisdom of every antecedent age! To learn moderation from the ambition of one, caution from the rashness of another, and prudence perhaps from the indiscretion of both! To apply foregone examples to his own use; adopting what is excellent, shunning what is erroneous, and omitting what is irrelevant!

Reading and observation are the two grand sources of improvement; but they lie not equally open to all. From the latter, the sex and habits of a royal female, in a good measure, exclude her. She must then, in a greater degree, depend on the
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information which books afford, opened and illustrated by her preceptor. Though her personal observation must be limited, her advantages from historical sources may be large and various.

If history for a time, especially during the reign of the prince whose actions are recorded, sometimes misrepresent characters, the dead, even the royal dead, are seldom flattered; unless, which indeed too frequently happens, the writer is deficient in that just conception of moral excellence, which teaches to distinguish what is splendid from what is solid. But, sooner or later, history does justice. She snatches from oblivion, or reproach, the fame of those virtuous men, whom corrupt princes, not contented with having sacrificed them to their unjust jealousy, would rob also of their fair renown. When Arulenus Rusticus was condemned by Domitian, for having written, with its deserved eulogium, the life of that excellent citizen, Thrasea Pætus; when Senecio was put to death by

the same emperor, for having rendered the like noble justice to Helvidius Priscus — when the historians themselves, like the patriots whom they celebrated, were sentenced to death, their books also being condemned to the flames; when Fannia, the incomparable wife of Helvidius, was banished, having the courage to carry into exile that book which had been the cause of it; a book of which her conjugal piety had furnished the materials. — “ In the fire which consumed these books,” says the author of the life of Agricola, “ the tyrants imagined that they had stifled the very utterance of the Roman people, abolished the lawful power of the senate, and forced mankind to doubt of the very evidence of their senses. Having expelled philosophy, and exiled science, they flattered themselves that nothing, which bore the stamp of virtue, would exist *.” — But history has vindicated the noble sufferers. Pœtus and Helvidius will ever be ranked among the most ho-

* Beginning of Tacitus's Life of Agricola.

nourable

nourable patriots ; while the emperor, who, in destroying their lives could not injure their reputation, is consigned to eternal infamy.

The examples which history records, furnish faithful admonitions to succeeding princes, respecting the means by which empires are erected and overturned. They shew by what arts of wisdom, or by what neglect of those arts, little states become great, or great states fall into ruin ; with what equity or injustice wars have been undertaken ; with what ability or incapacity they have been conducted ; with what sagacity or short-sightedness treaties have been formed. How national faith has been maintained, or forfeited. How confederacies have been made, or violated. History, which is the amusement of other men, is the school of princes. They are not to read it merely as the rational occupation of a vacant hour, but to consult it, as a storehouse of materials for the art of government.

There is a splendour in heroic actions, which fires the imagination, and forcibly

lays hold on the passions. Hence, the poets were the first, and, in the rude ages of antiquity, the only historians. They seized on whatever was dazzling in character, or shining in action; exaggerated heroic qualities, immortalized patriotism, and deified courage. But, instead of making their heroes patterns to men, they lessened the utility of their example, by elevating them into gods.

Hence however arose the first idea of history; of snatching the deeds of illustrious men from the delusions of fable; of bringing down extravagant powers, and preternatural faculties, within the limits of human nature and possibility; and reducing overcharged characters to the size and shape of real life; giving proportion, order, and arrangement to the widest scheme of action, and to the most extended duration of time.

CHAP. VI.

Laws — Egypt — Persia.

BUT however the fictions of poetry might have given being to history ; it was sage political institutions, good governments, and wise laws, which formed both its solid basis, and its valuable superstructure. And it is from the labours of ancient legislators, the establishment of states, the foundation of governments, and the progress of civil society, that we are to look for more real greatness, and more useful instruction, than from all the extravagant exploits, recorded in the fabulous ages of antiquity.

So deep is the reverential awe which mankind have uniformly blended with the idea of laws, that almost all civilized nations have affected to wrap up the origin of them in the obscurity of a devout mystery, and to intimate that they sprang from a divine source. This has arisen partly from a love of the
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marvellous, inherent in the human mind ; partly from the vanity of a national fondness in each country, for losing their original in the trackless paths of impenetrable antiquity. Of the former of these tastes, a legislator, like Numa, who had deep views, and who knew how much the people reverence whatever is mysterious, would naturally avail himself. And his supposed divine communication was founded in his consummate knowledge of the human mind, a knowledge which a wise prince will always turn to good account.

But, however the mysteriousness of the origin of laws may excite the reverence of the vulgar, it is the wise only who will duly venerate their sanctity, as they alone can appreciate their value. LAWS are providentially designed, not only to be the best subsidiary aid of religion, where she is operative, but to be in some sort her substitute, in those instances where her own direct operations might be ineffectual. For, even where the immediate law of God is little regarded, the
civil

civil code may be externally efficient, from its sanctions being more visible, palpable, tangible. And human laws are directly fitted to restrain the outward acts of those, whose hearts are not influenced by the divine injunctions. Laws, therefore, are the surest fences of the best blessings of civilized life. They bind society together, while they strengthen the separate interests of those whom they reciprocally unite. They tie the hands of depredation in the poor, and of oppression in the rich; protect the weak against the encroachments of the powerful, and draw their sacred shelter round all that is dear in domestic, or valuable in social life. They are the truest guardians of the dignity of the throne, and the only rampart of the liberty of the people.

On the law of nature, and the law of revelation (where revelation is known), all human laws ought to depend. That a rule of civil conduct should be prescribed to man, by the state in which he lives, is made necessary by nature, as well as sanctioned

tioned by revelation. Were man an-insulated being, the law of nature, and of revelation, would suffice for him ; but, for aggregate man, something more than even municipal laws becomes requisite. Divided as human beings are into separate states, and societies, connected among themselves, but disconnected with other states, each requires with relation to the other, certain general rules, called the law of nations, as much as each state needs respecting itself, those distinct codes, which are suited to their own particular exigencies. On the whole, then, as the natural sense of weakness and fear impels man to seek the protection, and the blessing of laws, so from the experience of that protection, and the sense of that blessing, his reason derives the most powerful argument to desire their perpetuation ; and his providential destiny becomes his choice.

If, therefore, we would truly estimate the value of laws, let us figure to ourselves the misery of that state of nature in which there should be no law, but that of the strongest ;

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no judge to determine right, or to punish wrong ; to redress suffering, or to repel injury ; to protect the weak, or to control the powerful.

If, under the prevalence of a false, and even absurd religion, several ancient states, that of Egypt in particular, subsisted in so much splendour * for so long a period, and afterwards sunk into such abject depression, the causes of both are obvious. The LAWS of ancient Egypt were proverbial for their wisdom. It has not escaped several Chris-

* It is to be observed, that this splendour alludes to the prosperity arising from wise political institutions merely ; for the private morals of Egypt must have borne some proportion to her corrupt idolatry, which afterwards became of the most degrading and preposterous kind. Her wisdom, we must therefore infer, was chiefly *political* wisdom. Her morality seems to have been, in a good measure, cultivated with a view to aggrandize the state, and in violation of many natural feelings, as was the case in Sparta. Egypt was a well-compacted political society, and her virtue appears to have been the effect of political discipline. In enumerating her merits, *our* object is, to prove the great importance of LAWS.

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tian historians, that it was the human praise of him, who was ordained to be the legislator of God's own people, that *he was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians*. And it was meant to confer an high eulogium on the wisest of the kings of Israel, that his wisdom eclipsed that of Egypt.

The laws of this state so strongly enforced mercy, that they punished with death those who refused to save the life of a fellow-creature, if attacked, when it was in their power. The justice of the Egyptian laws was so inflexible, that the kings obliged the judges to swear, that they would never depart from the principles of rectitude, though even in obedience to the royal command. Their respect for individual virtue, and for that reputation which follows it, was so high, that a kind of moral inquisition was appointed, on the death of every citizen, to inquire what sort of life he had lived, that his memory might be accordingly had in honour, or detestation. From the verdict of this solemn tribunal, even their kings themselves were not exempted.

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The whole aim and end of education among them, was to inspire a veneration for GOVERNMENT and RELIGION. They had a law, which assigned some employment to every individual of the state. And though the genius of our free constitution would justly reprobate, what, indeed, its temperate and judicious restraints render unnecessary among us, that clause which directed that the employment should be perpetuated in the same family ; yet, perhaps, the severe moralist, with the example of the well-ordered government of Egypt before his eyes, might reasonably doubt whether a law, the effect of which was to keep men in their places, though it might now and then check the career of a lofty genius, was not a much less injury to society, than the free scope which was afforded to the turbulent ambition of every aspiring spirit in the Greek democracies. Bossuet, who has, perhaps, penetrated more deeply into these subjects than almost any modern, has pronounced Egypt to be the fountain of all political wisdom.

What

What afterwards plunged the Egyptians into calamity, and brought final dissolution on their government? It was a departure from its constitutional principles; it was the neglect and contempt of those venerable laws which, for *sixteen centuries*, had constituted their glory and their happiness. They exchanged the love of their wise domestic institutions, for the ambition of subduing distant countries. One of their most heroic sovereigns (as is not unusual) was the instrument of their misfortunes. Sesostris was permitted, by Divine Providence, to diminish the true glory of Egypt, by a restless ambition to extend her territory. This splendid prince abandoned the real grandeur of governing wisely at home, for the false glory of foreign conquests, which detained him nine years in distant climates. At a remote period, the people, weary of the blessings they had so long enjoyed under a single monarch, weakened the royal power, by dividing it among multiplied sovereigns.

What

What exalted the ancient Persians to such lasting fame? The equity and strict execution of their LAWS. It was their sovereign disdain of falsehood in their public transactions. Their considering fraud as the most degrading of vices, and thus transfusing the spirit of their laws into their conduct. It was that love of justice (modern statesmen would do well to imitate the example) which made them oblige themselves to commend the virtues of their enemies. It was such an extraordinary respect for education, that no sorrow was ever expressed for young persons who died uninstructed. It was by paying such an attention to the children of the sovereign, that, at the age of fourteen, they were placed under the care of four statesmen, who excelled in different talents. By one they were instructed in the principles of justice; by another they were taught to subdue sensuality; by a third they were initiated in the art of government; and, by a fourth, in the duties of religion. Plato has given a beautiful sketch of this accomplished and sublime education.

It will be found, that nearly the same causes which forwarded the ruin of Egypt, contributed to destroy Persia; a dereliction of those fundamental principles of legislation and morals, to which it had been indebted for its long prosperity and grandeur.

But be it remembered, that the best human laws will not be exempt from the imperfection inseparably bound up with all human things. Let us beware, however, of those innovators, who, instead of carefully improving, and vigorously executing, those laws which are already established, adopt no remedies short of destruction; tolerate no improvements short of creation: who are carried away by a wild scheme of visionary perfection, which, if it could anywhere be found to exist, would not be likely to be found in the projects of men, who disdain to avail themselves of ancient experience,—and progressive wisdom. Thucydides was a politician of another cast; for he declared, that even indifferent laws, vigilantly executed, were superior to the best, that were not properly obeyed. Those mo-

dern reformists, who affect to be in raptures with the Greek republics, would do well to imitate the deliberation, the slowness, the doubt, with which the founder of the Athenian legislation introduced his laws. Instead of those sudden and instantaneous constitutions we have witnessed, which, disdain the slow growth of moral births, have started at once, full grown, from the brain of the projector, and were as suddenly superseded as rapidly produced; Solon would not suffer a single law to be determined on, and accepted, till the first charm of novelty was past, and the first heat of enthusiasm had cooled. What would the same capricious theorists say to that reverence with which the Egyptians, above cited, regarded antiquity, example, custom, law, prescription? This sage people considered every political novelty with a jealousy equal to the admiration with which it is regarded by the new school. Trial, proof, experience, was the slow criterion by which they ventured to decide on the

excellence of any institution. While, to the licentious innovator, antiquity is ignorance, custom is tyranny, order is intolerance, laws are chains. But the end has corresponded with the beginning. Their “baseless fabrics” have fallen to pieces before they were well reared ; and have exposed their superficial, but self-sufficient builders, to the just derision of mankind.

CHAP. VII.

Greece.

WHEN we contemplate Greece, and especially when we fix our eyes on Athens, our admiration is strongly, I had almost said, is irresistibly excited, in reflecting, that such a diminutive spot concentrated within itself whatever is great and eminent in almost every point of view ; whatever confers distinction on the human intellect ; whatever is calculated to inspire wonder, or communicate delight. Athens was the pure well-head of poetry ;

Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light.

It was the theatre of arms, the cradle of the arts, the school of philosophy, and the parent of eloquence.

To be regarded as the masters in learning,
the oracle of taste, and the standard of politeness,

liteness, to the whole civilized world, is a splendid distinction. But it is a pestilent mischief, when the very renown attending such brilliant advantages becomes the vehicle for carrying into other countries the depraved manners by which these pre-eminent advantages are accompanied. This was confessedly the case of Greece with respect to Rome. Rome had conquered Greece by her arms; but whenever a subjugated country contributes, by her vices, to enslave the state which conquered her, she amply revenges herself.

But the perils of this contamination do not terminate with their immediate consequences. The ill effects of Grecian manners did not cease with the corruptions which they engendered at Rome. There is still a serious danger, lest, while the ardent and high-spirited young reader contemplates Greece only through the splendid medium of her heroes and her artists, her poets and her orators; while his imagination is fired with the glories of conquest, and captivated
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with the charms of literature, that he may lose sight of the disorders, the corruptions, and the crimes, by which Athens, the famous seat of arts and of letters, was dishonoured. May he not be tinctured (allowing for change of circumstances) with something of that spirit which inflamed Alexander, when, as he was passing the Hydaspes, he enthusiastically exclaimed, “O Athenians! could you believe to what dangers I expose myself, for the sake of being celebrated by you!”

Many of the Athenian vices originated in the very nature of their constitution; in the very spirit of that turbulent democracy which Solon could not restrain, nor the ablest of his successors control. The great founder of their legislation felt the dangers inseparable from the democratic form of government, when he declared, “that he had not given them the best laws, but the best which they were able to bear.” In the very establishment of his institutions, he betrayed his distrust of this species of government,

vernment, by those guards and ramparts which he was so assiduous in providing and multiplying. Knowing himself to be incapable of setting aside the popular power, his attention was directed to divest it, as much as possible, of its mischiefs, by the entrenchments that he strove to cast about it. His sagacious mind anticipated the ill effects of that republican restlessness, that at length completely overturned the state which it had so often menaced, and so constantly distracted.

This unsettled government, which left the country perpetually exposed to the tyranny of the few, and the turbulence of the many, was never bound together by any principle of union, by any bond of interest, common to the whole community, except when the general danger, for a time, annihilated the distinction of separate interests. The restraint of laws was feeble; the laws themselves were often contradictory; often ill administered; popular intrigues, and tumultuous assemblies, frequently obstructing their operation,

ration. The noblest services were not seldom rewarded with imprisonment, exile, or assassination. Under every change, confiscation and proscription were never at a stand ; and the only way of effacing the impression of any revolution which had produced these outrages, was to promote a new one, which engendered, in its turn, fresh outrages, and improved upon the antecedent disorders.

By this light and capricious people, acute in their feelings, carried away by every sudden gust of passion, as mutable in their opinions as unjust in their decisions, the most illustrious patriots were first sacrificed, and then honoured with statues ; their heroes were murdered as traitors, and then revered as Gods. This wanton abuse of authority, this rash injustice, and fruitless repentance, would be the inevitable consequence of lodging supreme power in the hands of a vain and variable populace, inconstant in their very vices, perpetually
vibrating

vibrating between irretrievable crimes and ineffectual regrets,

That powerful oratory, which is to us so just a subject of admiration, was, doubtless, no inconsiderable cause of the public disorders. And to that exquisite talent, which constitutes one of the chief boasts of Athens, we may look for one principal source of her disorders :

Those ancients, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will the fierce Democracy,
Shook th' arsenal, and fulmin'd over Greece,
'To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne.

When we consider what mighty influence this talent gave to the popular leaders, and what a powerful engine their demagogues possessed, to work upon the passions of the multitude, who composed their popular assemblies ; when we reflect on the character of those crowds, on whom this stirring eloquence was exercised, and remember that their opinion decided on the fate of the country : all this will contribute to account for the frequency and violence of the public commotions,

motions, and naturally explains why that rhetorical genius, which shed so bright a lustre on the country, was, from the nature of the constitution, frequently the instrument of convulsing it.

While the higher class, in many of the Greek republics, seemed without scruple to oppress their inferiors, the populace of Athens commonly exerted the same hostile spirit of resentment against their leaders.— Competition, circumvention, litigation; every artifice of private fraud, every stratagem of personal injustice, filled up the short intervals of foreign wars and public contests. How strikingly is St. Paul's definition of that light and frivolous propensity of the Athenians, which led them to pass the day only "to hear or to tell some new thing," illustrated, by Plutarch's relation of the illiterate citizen, who voted Aristides to the punishment of the Ostracism! When this great man questioned his accuser, whether Aristides had ever injured him? He replied, so far from it, that he did not
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even know him, only he was quite *wearied out* with hearing him every where called *the just*. Besides that spirit of envy which is peculiarly alive in democracies; to have heard this excellent person calumniated, would have been a refreshing novelty, and have enabled him “to tell a new thing.”

That passionate fondness for scenic diversions, which led the Athenians not only to apply part of the public money to the support of the theatres, and to pay for the admission of the populace, but also made it a capital crime to divert this fund to any other service, even to the service of the state, so sacred was this application of it deemed—was another concurrent cause of the profligacy of public manners *. The abuses to which this universal

* Pericles not being rich enough to supplant his competitor by acts of liberality, procured this law with a view to make his court to the people. He scrupled not, in order to secure their attachment to his person and government, by thus “buying them with their own money,” effectually to promote their
natural

versal invitation to luxury and idleness led ; the licentiousness of that purely democratic spirit, which made the lowest classes claim, as a right, to partake in the diversions of the highest ; the pernicious productions of some of the comic poets ; the unbounded licence introduced by the mask ; the voluptuousness of their music, whose extraordinary effects it would be impossible to believe, were they not confirmed by the general voice of antiquity : all these concurring circumstances induced a depravation of morals, of which less enlightened countries do not often present an example.

natural levity and idleness, and to corrupt their morals.—The rulers of a neighbouring nation have been too skilful adepts in the art of corruption, not to admire and eagerly adopt an example so suited to their political circumstances, and so congenial to their national frivolity. Accordingly, an unexampled multitude of theatres have been opened ; and in order to allay the discontents of the lower class at the expence of their time and morals, the price of these diversions has been reduced so low as almost to emulate the gratuitous admission of the Athenian populace.

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The prophane and impure Aristophanes was almost adored, while the virtue of Socrates not only procured him a violent death, but the poet, by making the philosopher contemptible to the populace, paved the way to his unjust sentence by the judges. Nay, perhaps the delight which the Athenians took in the impious and offensively loose wit of this dramatic poet, rendered them more deaf to the voice of that virtue which was taught by Plato, and of that liberty in which they had once gloried, and which Demosthenes continued to thunder in their unheeding ears. Their rage for sensual pleasure rendered them a fit object for the projects of Philip, and a ready prey to the attacks of Alexander.

In lamenting, however, the corruptions of the theatre in Athens, justice compels us to acknowledge, that her immortal tragic poets, by their chaste and manly compositions, furnish a noble exception. In no country has decency and purity, and, to the disgrace of Christian countries, let it be added,

added, have morality and even piety, been so generally prevalent in any theatrical compositions, as in what

— her lofty grave Tragedians taught
In Chorus or Iambic, teachers best
Of moral Prudence.

Yet, in paying a just and warm tribute to the moral excellencies of these sublime dramatists, is not an answer provided to that long agitated question, Whether the stage can be indeed made a school of morals? No question had ever a fairer chance for decision than was here afforded.—If it be allowed, that there never was a more profligate city than Athens; if it be equally indisputable, that never country possessed more unexceptionable dramatic poets than Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; if the same city thus at once produced the best physicians, and the worst patients, what is the result? Do the Athenian annals record, that any class or condition of citizens were actually reformed by constantly frequenting,

quenting, we had almost said, by constantly living in the theatre ?

Plutarch, who severely condemns the Athenians, had too just a judgment to censure either the excellence of the poets, or the good taste of the people who admired them. But he blames them for that excessive passion for diversions, "which," says he, "by setting up a new object of attachment had nearly extinguished public virtue, and made them more anxious about the fate of a play than about the fate of their country*."

Such were the manners which historians, orators, and poets have consigned to immortal fame ! Such were the people for whom our highly educated youth are taught to feel an enthusiastic admiration ! Such are the forms of government which have excited the envy, and partly furnished the model to the bloody innovators, and frantic politicians of our age ! Madly to

* See Wortley Montagu, of the Rise and Fall of ancient Republics.

glory in the dream of liberty, and to be in fact the victim of changing tyrants, but unchanging tyranny. — This was the coveted lot of ancient Athens! This is the object of reverence, eulogy, and imitation to a large portion of modern Europe!

In reflecting on the splendid works of genius and of art in Athens, as opposed to the vices of her government, and the licentiousness of her morals, — will it be thought an adequate compensation for the corruptions of both, if we grant, as we are disposed to do, in its fullest extent, that unparalleled combination of talents, which delighted and informed the rest of the world? If we allow that this elegance of taste spread so wide, and descended so low, that every individual of an Athenian mob might, as has been triumphantly asserted*, be a just critic of dramatic composition? That the ear of the populace was so nicely tuned, and so refined a judge of the delicacies of

* See an elegant paper in the *Adventurer*, in which some of these triumphs of Athens are asserted.

pronunciation, than an Attic herb-woman could detect the provincial accent of a learned philosopher? Is it even a sufficient compensation, exquisite as we allow the gratification to have been, that the spectator might range among the statues of Lyfippus, or the pictures of Apelles, or the critic enjoy the still more intellectual luxury of listening to an oration of Demosthenes, of a scene of Euripides, — while the rulers of so accomplished a people were in general dissolute, tyrannical; oppressive, and unjust; and the people themselves universally sunk into the most degraded state of manners; immersed in the last excess of effeminacy; debased by the most excessive sensuality, fraud, idleness, avarice, gaming, and debauchery?

If here and there the eye is relieved, and the feelings are refreshed, with the casual appearance of a Miltiades, a Cimon, an Aristides, a Socrates, a Phocion, or a Xenophon; yet these thinly scattered stars serve less to retrieve the Athenian character,
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by their solitary lustre, or even by their confluent radiance, than to overwhelm it with disgrace, by the atrocious injustice with which these bright luminaries were treated by their country. The eulogium of the citizen is the satire of the state.

While we observe that Greece first became powerful, rich and great, through the energy of her people, and the vigour of her character, and that this very greatness, power, and riches, have a natural bias towards corruption; that while they happily tend to produce and nourish those arts, which in their just measure are the best embellishments of a nation; yet carried to excess, and misapplied to vicious purposes, tend to weaken and corrupt it; that Athens, by her public and private vices, and by her very refinement in politeness, and her devotedness to the arts, not only precipitated her own ruin, — but by the transplantation of those arts, encumbered with those vices, ultimately contributed to ruin Rome also. — While we take this retrospect,

we, of this highly-favoured land, may receive an awful admonition; we may make a most instructive comparison of our own situation with respect to a neighbouring nation,—a nation which, under the rapidly-shifting form of every mode of government, from the despotism of absolute monarchy to a republican anarchy, to which the royal tyranny was comparative freedom;—and now again, in the closing scene of this changeful drama, to the heavy subjugation of military despotism, has never ceased to be the object of childish admiration, of passionate fondness, and servile imitation, to too many in our own country; to persons, too, whose rank, giving them the greatest stake in it, have most to risk by the assimilation with her manners, and most to lose by the adoption of her principles. And though, through the special providence and undeserved mercies of God, we have withstood the flood of revolutionary doctrines, let us, taking warning from the resemblance above pointed out, no longer persist, as in
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the halcyon days of peace, fervilely to adopt her language, habits, manners and corruptions. For now to fill up the measure of our danger, her pictures, and her statues, not the fruits of her own genius — for here the comparison with Athens fails — but the plunder of her usurpation, and the spoils of her injustice, by holding out new baits to our curiosity, and new attractions to our admiration, are in danger of fatally and finally accomplishing the resemblance. — May the omen be averted!

Among the numberless lessons which *we* may derive from the study of Grecian history, there is one which cannot be too often inculcated, more especially as it is a fact little relished by many of our more refined wits and politicians, — we mean the error of ascribing to arts, to literature, and to politeness, that power of softening and correcting the human heart, which is, in truth, the exclusive prerogative of *religion*. Really to mend the heart, and purify the principle,

is a deeper work than the most finished cultivation of the *taste* has ever been able to effect. The polished Athenians were among the most unjust of mankind in their national acts, and the most cruel towards their allies. They remarkably exemplify the tendency of *acting in a body*, to lessen each man's individual consciousness of guilt or cruelty. This polite people, in their political capacity, committed, without scruple, actions of almost unparalleled barbarity.

Every reflecting class of British, and especially of Christian readers, will not fail to peruse the annals of this admired republic with sentiments of deep gratitude to heaven for the vast superiority of our own national, civil, social, moral, and religious blessings. And they may enrich the catalogue with that one additional advantage, which Xenophon thought was all that Athens wanted, and which we possess — *We are an island* *.

* See Montesquieu *Esprit des Loix*, vol. ii. p. 3.

The sound and sober politician will see most strongly illustrated, in the evils of the Athenian state, (though dissimilar in some respects from modern democracy,) the blessings of our representative government, and of our deliverance from any approximation towards that mob-government, to which universal suffrage would be the natural and necessary introduction.

The delicate and refined female of our favoured country will feel peculiar sensations of thankfulness, in comparing her happy lot with the degraded state of women in the politest ages of Greece. Condemned to ignorance, labour, and obscurity; excluded from rational intercourse; debarred from every species of intellectual improvement or innocent enjoyment; they never seem to have been the objects of respect or esteem; in the conjugal relation, the servile agent, not the endeared companion. Their depressed state was, in some measure, confirmed by illiberal legal institutions; and their native genius was systematically restrained

restrained from rising above one degraded level. — Such was the lot of the *virtuous* part of the sex. We forbear to oppose to this gloomy picture the profligate renown to which the bold pretensions of daring vice elevated mercenary beauty; nor would we glance at the impure topic, but to remind our amiable countrywomen, that immodesty in dress, contempt of the sober duties of domestic life, a boundless appetite for pleasure, and a misapplied devotion to the arts, were among the steps which led to this systematic profession of shameless profligacy, and to the establishment of those countenanced corruptions which raised the more celebrated, but infamous, Athenian women

To that bad eminence.

Every description of men, who know how to estimate public good, or private happiness, will joyfully acknowledge the visible effect which Christianity has had (independently of its influence over its real votaries) in improving and elevating the general
8 standard

standard of morals, so as considerably to rectify and raise the conduct of those who are not directly actuated by its principles. And, lastly, to say nothing of a pure church establishment, so diametrically the reverse of the deplorably blind and ignorant rites of Athenian worship *,—who can contemplate, without a thankful heart, that large infusion of Christianity into our national laws, which has set them so infinitely above all comparison with the admired codes of Lycurgus and of Solon?

* Acts of the Apostles, ch. xvii.

CHAP. VIII.

Rome.

IF the Romans, from being a handful of banditti, rendered themselves in a short period lords of the universe ; — if Rome, from being an ordinary town in Italy, became foremost in genius and in arms, and at length unrivalled in imperial magnificence ; let it be remembered that the foundations of this greatness were laid in some of the extraordinary virtues of that republic. The personal frugality of her citizens ; the remarkable simplicity of their manners ; the habit of transferring from themselves^e to the state all pretensions to external consequence and splendour ; the strictness of her laws, and the striking impartiality of their execution ; that inflexible regard to justice, which led them, in the early ages of the republic —

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so little was the doctrine of *expediency* in repute among *them* — to inflict penalties on those citizens who even conquered by deceit, and not by valour; that vigilant attention to private morals which the establishment of a censorship secured, and that zeal for liberty, which was at the same time supported by her political constitution. — These causes were the true origin of the Roman greatness. This was the pedestal on which her colossal power was erected; and though she remained mistress of the world, even at a time when these virtues had begun to decline, the first impulse not having ceased to operate, yet a discerning eye might even then perceive her growing internal weakness, and might anticipate her final dissolution.

Republican Rome, however, has been much too highly panegyricised. The Romans had, indeed, a public feeling, to which every kind of private affection gave way; and it is chiefly on the credit of their sacrificing their individual interests to the national

tional cause, that they acquired so high a renown.

It may not be unworthy of remark, that the grand fundamental principle of the ancient republics (and though it was still more strikingly manifest in the Grecian, it was in no small degree the case with Republican Rome) was different from that which constitutes the essential principle of the British constitution, and even opposite to it. In the former the *public* was every thing; the rights, the comforts, the very existence of *individuals*, were as nothing. With *us*, happily, the case is very different, nay, even exactly the reverse. The well-being of the whole community is provided for, by effectually securing the rights, the safety, the comforts of every individual. Among the ancients, the grossest acts of injustice against private persons were continually perpetrated, and were regarded as beneath account, when they stood in the way of the will, the interest, the aggrandisement, the glory of the state. In *our* happier country, not the meanest

meanest subject can be injured in his person or his possessions. The little stock of the artizan, the peaceful cottage of the peasant, is secured to him by the universal superintendence, and the strong protection of the public force. The state is justly considered as made up of an aggregate of particular families; and it is by securing the well-being of each, that all are preserved in prosperity. We could delight to descant largely on this topic; and surely the contemplation could not but warm the hearts of Britons with lively gratitude to the Author of all their blessings, and with zealous attachment to that constitution, which conveys and secures to them the enjoyment of such unequalled happiness! But we dare not expatiate in so wide a field. Let us, however, remark the degree in which the benevolent spirit of Christianity is transfused into our political system. As it was the glory of our religion to take the poor under her instruction, and to administer her consolations to the wretched, so it is the beauty of our constitution

stitution that she considers, not as below her care, the seats of humble but honest industry ; the peaceful dwellings, and quiet enjoyments, of the lover of domestic comfort.

Again — This vital spirit of our constitution is favourable to virtue, as well as congenial with religion, and conducive to happiness. It checks that spirit of injustice and oppression which is so manifest in the conduct of the antient republics towards all other nations. It tends to diffuse a general sense of moral obligation, a continual reference to the claims of others, and our own consequent obligations : in short, a continual reference to the *real* rights of man ; a term which, though so shamefully abused, and converted into the watch-word of riot and rebellion, yet, truly and properly understood, is of sound meaning and constant application. By princes especially, these rights should ever be kept in remembrance. They were, indeed, never so well secured, as by that excellent injunction of our blessed Saviour, *To do to others as we would have them*

them do to us. And to which the apostle's brief, but comprehensive directions, form an admirable commentary: *Honour all men — Love your brethren — Fear God — Honour the King.*

But, to return to the Romans: their very patriotism, by leading them to thirst for universal empire, finally destroyed them, being no less fatal to the morals, than to the greatness of the state. Even their vaunted public spirit partly originated in the necessities of their situation. They were a little state, surrounded by a multitude of other little states, and they had no safety but in union. "Necessity first roused the genius of war, and the habits of experienced and successful valour kept him awake. The love of wealth and power, in latter ages, carried on what original bravery had begun; till, in the unavoidable vicissitude of human affairs, Rome perished beneath the weight of that pile of glory which she had been so long rearing *."

* Carlo Denina on the ancient Republics of Italy.
Their

Their laws and constitution were naturally calculated to promote their public spirit, and to produce their union. Having succeeded in repelling the attacks of the small rival powers, and, by their peculiar fortune, or rather by the designation of Providence, having become the predominating power in Italy, they proceeded to add conquest to conquest, making in the pride of conscious superiority, wars evidently the most unjust. Yet it must not be denied, that the occupation which progressive conquests found for the citizens, communicated a peculiar hardness to the Roman character, and served to retard the growth both of luxury and faction. That public spirit, which might be justified when it applied itself to wars of self-defence, became by degrees little better than the principle of a band of robbers on a great scale ; at the best, of honourable robbers, who, for the sake of the spoil, agree fairly to co-operate in order to obtain it, and divide it equally when it is obtained.

This

This public spirit seems to have existed so long as there were any objects of foreign ambition remaining, and so long as any sense was left of foreign danger. Even in the midst of unlawful and unrelenting war, it is important to bear in mind, that many of the ancient virtues were still assiduously cultivated; the laws were still had in reverence, and, in spite of a corrupt Polytheism, and of many and great defects in the morality and the constitution of Rome, this was the salt which, for a time, preserved her. The firmness of character, and deep political sagacity of the Romans, seem to have borne an exact proportion to each other. That foreseeing wisdom, that penetrating policy, which led Montesquieu to observe, that they conquered the world by *maxims* and *principles*, seem in reality, to have insured the success of their conquests, almost more than their high national valour, and their bold spirit of enterprize.

What was it which afterwards plunged

Rome into the lowest depths of degradation, and finally blotted her out from among the nations? It was her renouncing those *maxims* and *principles*. It was her departure from every virtuous and self-denying habit. It was the gradual relaxation of private morals. It was the substitution of luxury for temperance, and of a mean and narrow selfishness for public spirit. It was a contempt for the sober manners of the ancient republic, and a dereliction of the old principles of government, even while the forms of that government were retained. It was the introduction of a new philosophy more favourable to sensuality; it was the importation, by her Asiatic proconsuls, of every luxury which could pamper that sensuality. It was, in short, the evils, resulting from those two passions which monopolized their souls, the lust of power, and the lust of gold. These passions operated on each other, as cause and effect, action and re-action; and produced that rapid corruption which Sal-

lust

lust describes with so much spirit — *Mores majorum non paulatim ut antea, sed torrentis modo precipitati*. Profligacy, venality, speculation, oppression, succeeded to that simplicity, patriotism, and high-minded disinterestedness, on which this nation had once so much valued itself, and which had attracted the admiration of the world. So that Rome, in the days of her pristine severity of manners, and Rome in the last period of her freedom, exhibits a stronger contrast than will be found between almost any two countries.

This depravation does not refer to solitary instances, to the shamelessness of a Verres, or the profligacy of a Piso, but to the general practice of avowed corruption and systematic venality. By the just judgment of Providence, the enjoyment of the spoils brought home from the conquered nations corrupted the conquerors; and at length compelled Rome, in her turn, both to fly before her enemies, and to bow down

her head under the most intolerable domestic yoke. Rome had no more the spirit to make any faint struggle for liberty after the death of Cæsar, than Greece after that of Alexander, though to each the occasion seemed to present itself. Neither state had virtue enough left to deserve, or even to desire to be free. The wisdom of Cato should, in the case of Rome, have discovered this ; and it should have spared him the fruitless attempt to restore liberty to a country which its vices had enslaved, and have preserved him, even on his own principles, from self-destruction.

Among the causes of the political servitude of Rome may be reckoned, in a considerable degree, the institution of the Pretorian bands, who, in a great measure, governed both the Romans and the emperors. These Pretorian bands presented the chief difficulty in the way of good emperors, some of whom they destroyed for attempting to reform them ; and of the bad emperors they were the electors.

In

In perusing the Roman history, these, and other causes of the decline and fall of the empire, should be carefully shewn; the tendency of private vices to produce factions, and the tendency of factions to overthrow liberty; a spirit of dissention, and a rapid deterioration of morals, being, in all states, the most deadly, and, indeed, the inseparable symptoms of expiring freedom. The no less baneful influence of arbitrary power, in the case of the many profligate and cruel emperors who succeeded, should be clearly pointed out.

It is also a salutary lesson on the hunger of conquest, and the vanity of ambition, to trace the Roman power, by its vast accession of territory, losing in solidity what it gained in expansion; furnishing a lasting example to future empires, who trust too much for the stability of their greatness to the deceitful splendour of remote acquisition, and the precarious support of distant colonial attachment.

Above all, the fall of Rome may be attributed, in no small degree, to the progress, and, gradually, to the prevalence of the Epicurean philosophy, and to its effect in taking away that reverence for the gods, which alone could preserve that deep sense of the sanctity of oaths for which Rome, in her better days, had been so distinguished. She had originally established her political system on this fear of the gods; and the people continued, as appears from Livy, to practise the duties of their religion * (such as it was) more scrupulously than any other ancient nation. The most amiable of the Roman patriots attributes the antecedent success and grandeur of his country to their conviction, “that all events are directed by a Divine Power †;” and Polybius,

* *Nulla unquam respublica sanctior, nec bonis exemplis ditior fuit.*

† See Montagu on the Rise and Fall of Ancient Republics.

speaking

speaking merely as a politician, accuses some, in his age, of rashness and absurdity, for endeavouring to extirpate the fear of the gods; declaring, that what others held to be an object of disgrace, he believed to be the very thing by which the republic was sustained. He illustrates his position by adducing the conduct of the two great states, one of which, from its adoption of the doctrines of Epicurus, had no sense of religion left, and consequently no reverence for the solemnities of an oath, which the other retained in its full force. “If, among the Greeks,” says he, “a single talent only be intrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money, though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals, and twice as many witnesses, they are *unable* to discharge the trust reposed in them with integrity, — while the Romans, who, in their magistracies and embassies, disburse the greatest sums, are prevailed on, by *the single obligation of an oath*,

to perform their duty with inviolable honesty *.”

In her subsequent total dereliction of this integrity, what a lesson does Rome hold out to *us*, to be careful not to lose the influences of a purer religion ! To guard, especially, against the fatal effects of a needless multiplication of oaths, and the light mode in which they are too frequently administered ! The citizens of Rome, in the days of the younger Cato, had no resource left against this pressing evil, because it was in vain to inculcate a reverence for *their* gods, and to revive the influence of *their* religion. But, if even the belief of false gods had the power of conveying political and moral benefits, which the dark system of Atheism annihilated, how earnestly should we endeavour to renovate and diffuse the ancient deference for the true religion, by teaching systematically and seriously, to our

* Hampton's Polybius, vol. ii. book 6. on the Excellencies of the Roman government.

youth,

youth, the divine principles of that Christianity which, in better times, was the honourable practice of our forefathers, and which can alone restore a due veneration for the solemnity of oaths*.

* The admirable Hooker observes, that even the falsest religions were mixed with some truths, which had "very notable effects." Speaking of the dread of perjury in the ancient Romans, he adds, "It was their hurt untruly to attribute so great power to false gods, as that they were able to prosecute, with fearful tokens of divine revenge, the wilful violation of oaths and execrable blasphemies, offered by deriders of religion even unto those false gods. Yet the right belief which they had, that to perjury vengeance is due, was not without good effect, as touching the course of their lives who feared the wilful violation of oaths." — Ecclesiastical Polity.

CHAP. IX.

*Characters of Historians, who were concerned
in the Transactions which they record.*

OF the modern writers of ancient history, the young reader will find that Rollin * has, in one respect, the decided superiority; we mean, in his practice of intermixing useful reflections on events and characters. But, we should strongly recommend the perusal of such portions of the original ancient historians, as a judicious preceptor would select. And, in reading historians, or politicians, ancient or modern, the most likely way to escape theories and fables, is to study those writers who were themselves actors in the scenes which they record.

Among the principal of these is — THUCYDIDES, whose opportunities of obtaining

* The writer forbears to name living authors.

informa-

information, whose diligence in collecting it, and whose judgment and fidelity in recording it, have obtained for him the general suffrage of the best judges ; who had a considerable share in many of the events which he records, having been an unfortunate, though meritorious commander in the Peloponnesian war, of which he is the incomparable historian ; — whose chronological accuracy is derived from his early custom of preparing materials as the events arose ; and whose genius confers as much honour, as his unmerited exile reflects disgrace, on his native Athens. In popular governments, and in none perhaps so much as in those of Greece, the ill effects or mismanagement at home have been too frequently charged on those who have had the conduct of armies abroad ; and where a sacrifice must be made, that of the absent is always the most easy. The integrity and patriotism of Thucydides, however, were proof against the ingratitude of the republic. His
work,

work was as impartial as if Athens had been just ; like Clarendon, he devoted the period of his banishment to the composition of a history, which was the glory of the country that banished him. — A model of candour, he wrote not for a party or a people, but for the world ; not for the applause of his age, but the instruction of posterity. And though his energy, spirit, and variety must interest all readers of taste, statesmen will best know his value, and politicians will look up to him as a master. — XENOPHON, the Attic bee, equally admirable in whatever point of view he is considered ; a consummate general, historian, and philosopher ; who carried on the historic series of the Greek revolutions from the period at which Thucydides discontinued it ; like him, was driven into banishment from that country, of which he was so bright an ornament, —

And with his exile'd hours enrich'd the world !

The conductor and narrator of a retreat
more

more honourable and more celebrated than the victories of other leaders ; a writer, who is considered by the first Roman critic, as the most exquisite model of simplicity and elegance ; and who, in almost all the transactions which he relates, *magna pars fuit*. — POLYBIUS, trained to be a statesman in the Achæan league, and a warrior at the conquest of Carthage ; the friend of Scipio, and the follower of Fabius ; and who is said to be more experimentally acquainted with the wars and politics of which he treats, than any other Greek. He is, however, more authentic than entertaining ; and the votaries of certain modern historians, who are satisfied with an epigram instead of a fact, who like turns of wit better than sound political reflections, and prefer an antithesis to truth, will not justly appreciate the merit of Polybius, whose love of authenticity induced him to make several voyages to the places of which his subjects led him to speak. — CÆSAR, of whom it would be difficult to say, whether
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he planned his battles with more skill, fought them with more valour, or described them with more ability; or whether his sword or pen executed his purposes with more celerity and effect; but, who will be less interesting to the general reader, than to the statesman and foldier. His commentaries, indeed, will be perused with less advantage by the hereditary successor of the sovereign of a settled constitution, than by those who are struggling with the evils of civil commotion. — JOINVILLE, whose life of his great master, Saint Louis, is written with the spirit of the ancient nobles, and the vivid earnestness of one, who saw with interest what he describes with fidelity; having been companion to the King in the expeditions which he records. — PHILIPPE DE COMINES, who possessed, by his personal concern in public affairs, all the avenues to the political and historical knowledge of his time, and whose memoirs will be admired while acute penetration, sound sense, and solid judgment survive. — DAVILA, who
learned

learned the art of war under that great master, Henry the Fourth of France, and whose history of the civil wars of that country furnishes a variety of valuable matter; who possesses the happy talent of giving interest to details, which would be dry in other hands; who brings before the eyes of the reader, every place which he describes, and every scene in which he was engaged; while his intimate knowledge of business, and of human nature, enables him to unveil with address, the mysteries of negotiation, and the subtilties of statesmen. This excellent work is disgraced by the most disgusting panegyrics on the execrable Catherine di Medici, an offence against truth and virtue, too glaring to be atoned for by any sense of personal obligation. In consequence of this partiality, he speaks of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, as slightly as if it had been a merely common act of necessary rigour on a few criminals; an *execution* being the cool term by which

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he describes that tremendous deed *. — **GUICCIARDIN**, a diplomatic historian, a lawyer, and a patriot; whose tedious orations and florid style cannot destroy the merit of his great work, the value of which is enhanced by the piety and probity of his own mind. — **SULLY**, the intrepid warrior, the able financier, the uncorrupt minister, who generally regulated the deep designs of the consummate statesman, by the inflexible rules of religion and justice; whose memoirs should be read by ministers, to instruct them how to serve kings; and by kings, to teach them how to chuse ministers. — **CARDINAL DE RETZ**, who delineates with accuracy and spirit the principal actors in the wars of the Fronde, in which he himself had been a chief agent; who develops the dissimulation of courts,

* Who can help regretting that the lustre of one of the most elegant works of antiquity, Quintilian's Institution of an Orator, should be in a similar manner tarnished by the most preposterous panegyrics on the Emperor Domitian?

with the skilfulness of an adept in the arts which he unfolds, yet affecting, while he pourtrays the artifices of others, a simplicity, the very reverse of his real character ; while his levity in writing retains so much of the licentiousness, and want of moral and religious principle of his former life, that he cannot be safely recommended to those whose principles of judgment and conduct are not fixed. Yet, his characters of the two famous cardinal prime ministers may be read with advantage by those, whose business leads them to such studies. The reader of de Retz will find frequent occasion to recognize the homage which even impiety and vice pay to religion and virtue, while the abundant corruptions of Popery will call forth from every considerate Protestant, devout sensations of gratitude to Heaven, for having delivered us from the tyranny of a system, so favourable to the production of the rankest abuses in the church, and the grossest superstition in the people.—TEMPLE, the zealous nego-

tiator of the triple alliance, and worthy, by his spirit and candour, to be the associate of De Wit in that great business which was transacted between them, with the liberal spirit, and honourable confidence of private friendship. His writings give the clearest insight into the period and events of which he treats; and his easy, though careless style, and well-bred manner, would come, almost more than any other, under the description of what may be called the *genteel*, did not his vanity a little break the charm. None, however, except his political writings, are meant to be recommended; his religious opinions being highly exceptionable and absurd. Yet it is but justice to add, that his unambitious temper, his fondness for private life, his enjoyment of its peace, and his taste for its pleasures, render his character interesting and amiable.—The manners-painting CLARENDON, the able chancellor, the exemplary minister, the inflexible patriot, who stemmed, almost singly, the torrent of vice, corruption, and venality;

lity ; and who was not ashamed of being religious in a court which was ashamed of nothing else ; whom the cabal hated for his integrity, and the court for his purity ; a statesman who might have had statues erected to him in any other period but that in which he lived ; would have reformed most other governments but that to which he belonged, and been supported by almost any king but him whom he had the misfortune to serve. Clarendon, the faithful biographer of his own life ; the majestic and dignified historian of the grand rebellion ; whose periods sometimes want beauty, but never sense, though that sense is often wrapped up in an involution and perplexity which a little obscure it ; whose style is weighty and significant, though somewhat retarded by the stateliness of its march, and somewhat encumbered with a redundancy of words.—TORCY, whose memoirs, though they may be thought to bear rather hard on the famous plenipotentiaries with whom he negotiated, and on the haughtiness of the

allies who employed them, are written with much good sense, modesty, and temper. They present a striking reverse in the fortune of the imperious disturber of Europe, "fallen from his high estate." He who had been used to give his orders from the banks of the Po, the Danube, and the Tagus, is seen reduced to supplicate for peace, and to exchange the insolence of triumph for the hope of existence. Two Dutch burgomasters, haughtily imposing their own terms on a monarch who had before filled France with admiration, and Europe with alarm. This reverse must impress the mind of the reader, as it does that of the writer, with an affecting sense of that controlling Providence, which thus derides the madness of ambition, and the folly of worldly wisdom; that Providence which, in maintaining its character of being the abaser of the proud, produces, by means, at first sight the most opposite, the accomplishment of its own purposes; and renders the unprincipled lust of dominion the instrument of
its

its own humiliation. The difficulties of a negotiator, who has to conclude an inglorious though indispensable treaty, are feelingly described, as well as the too natural, though hard fate of a minister, who is driven to such an unfortunate measure as that of being considered as the instrument of dishonour to his country. His pious recognition of God, as the supreme disposer of events, is worthy of great praise.—The copious and fluent BURNET, whose diffuse, but interesting *history of his own times*, informs and pleases; though the loose texture of his slovenly narration would not now be tolerated in a newspaper; who saw a great deal, and wishes to have it thought that he saw every thing; whose egotism we forgive for the sake of his frankness, and whose minuteness for the sake of his accuracy; who, if ever he exceeds, it is always on the side of liberty and toleration; an excess safe enough when the writer is soundly loyal, and unquestionably pious; and more especially safe when the reader is a prince.—LADY RUS-

SELL, worthy of being the daughter of the virtuous Southampton ; too fatally connected with the unhappy politics of the times ; whose life was a practical illustration of her faith in the divine support, and of submission to the divine will ; and whose letters, by their sound and sober piety, strong sense, and useful information, eclipse all those of her learned and distinguished correspondents.

CHAP. X.

Reflections on History—Ancient Historians.

IF, however, the historian be a compatriot, and especially if he be a contemporary, even though he was no actor in the drama, it is difficult for him not to range himself too uniformly on one side or the other. The human mind has a strong natural bias to adopt exclusive attachments. Perhaps man may be defined to be *an animal that delights in party*. Yet we are inclined to believe that an historian, though he may be partial and interested, yet, if he be keensighted and intelligent as to the facts of which he speaks, is, on the whole, a better witness than a more fair and candid, but worse-informed man; because we may more easily calculate the degree of allowance to be made for partiality and prejudice, than we can estimate that which is to be made for

defect of information. Of two evils, therefore, we should prefer a prejudiced, but well-informed, to a more impartial, but less enlightened narrator.

When materials are fresh, they are more likely to be authentic; but, unfortunately, when it is more easy to obtain, it is often less safe to employ them. When the events are more remote, their authenticity is more difficult to ascertain; and, when they are near, the passions which they excite are more apt to warp the truth. Thus, what might be gained in accuracy by nearness of position, is liable to be lost in the partiality which that very position induces. The true point of vision is attained, when the eye and the object are placed at their due distance. The reader who comes to the perusal of the work, in a more unimpassioned frame than, perhaps, the author wrote, will best collect the characters from the narrative, if fairly given.

Care should be taken not to extol shining characters in the gross, but to point out
their

their weakneſſes and errors ; nor ſhould the brilliant qualities of illuſtrious men be ſuffered to caſt a veil over their vices, or ſo to fascinate the young reader, as to excite admiration of their very faults. Even in peruſing *ſacred hiſtory*, we ſhould never extenuate, much leſs juſtify, the errors of great characters, but make them, at once, a ground for eſtabliſhing the doctrine of general corruption, and for quickening our own vigilance. The weakneſſes of the wiſeſt, and the errors of the beſt, while they ſhould be regarded with candour, muſt not be held up to imitation. It has been reaſonably conjectured, that many acts of cruelty in Alexander, whoſe diſpoſition was naturally merciful, were not a little owing to one of his preceptors having been early accuſtomed to call himſelf Phœnix, and his pupil Achilles ; and thus to have habitually trained him to an imitation even of the vices of this ferocious hero.

A prince muſt not ſtudy hiſtory merely to ſtore his memory with amuſing narratives or inſulated events, but with a view to

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trace the dependence of one event upon another. A common reader will be satisfied with knowing the exploits of Scipio or Hannibal, and will be sufficiently entertained with the description of the riches or beauty of such renowned cities as Carthage or Rome; but a prince (who is also a politician) studies history, in order to observe how ambition, operating on the breasts of two rival states, led to one war after another between these two states. By what steps the ruin of the one, and the triumph of the other, were hastened or delayed; by what indications the final catastrophe might have been antecedently known, or by what measures it might have been averted. He is interested not merely when a signal event arises, but by the whole skill of the game; and he is, on this account, anxious to possess many inferior circumstances, serving to unite one event with another, which, to the ordinary reader, appear insignificant and dull. Again, in the case of Pompey and Cæsar, the reflecting politician connects the triumphs of the latter with the political
and

and moral state of Rome. He bears in mind the luxurious habits of the Patricians, who became the officers in Pompey's army; the gradual decay of public spirit, the licentiousness and venality of the capital, and the arts by which Cæsar had prepared his troops, while they were in Gaul, for the contention which he already meditated for the empire of the world. He will, in idea, see that world already vanquished, when he considers the profound policy of this conqueror, who, on being appointed to the government of Gaul on both sides the Alps, by exciting the Gauls to solicit the same privileges with the Italians, opened to himself this double advantage:—the disturbance which this would occasion in Rome, would lift him into absolute power; while, by his kindness and protection to these people, he gained an accession of strength to overthrow his competitors. The ordinary reader is satisfied with the battle of Pharsalia for the entertainment it affords, and admires the splendour of the triumphs, without considering these things as links that connect the
events

events which are past with those which are to come.

The preceptor of the royal pupil will, probably, think it adviseable to select for her perusal some of the Lives of Plutarch. This author teaches two things excellently, antiquity and human nature. He would deserve admiration, were it only for that magazine of wisdom, condensed in the excellent sayings of so many great men, which he has recorded. Perhaps, all the historians together have not transmitted to us so many of the sage axioms and *bon mots* of ancient Greece and Rome. Yet, in his parallels—if that can be called a parallel which brings together two men who have commonly little or no resemblance—even the upright Plutarch exhibits something too much of the partiality lately noticed; the scale, whenever he weighs one of his own countrymen against a Roman, almost invariably inclining to the Greek side.

It may also be deemed useful to read to her a few select portions of Suetonius. Though he is an author utterly unfit to be
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put into youthful, and, especially, into female hands, yet a judicious instructor may select passages particularly appropriated to a royal pupil. In truth, the writings of the ancient authors of all classes, historians, satirists, poets, and even moralists, are liable to the same objection, whether it be Suetonius, or Plutarch, or Juvenal, or even the comparatively-decorous Virgil, that we take in hand; the perusal cannot fail to suggest to every considerate, and especially to every female reader, the obligations which we owe to Christianity, independently of its higher ends, for having so raised the standard of morals and of manners, as to have rendered almost too monstrous for belief, and too shocking for relation, in our days, the familiar and uncensored incidents of ancient times. Suetonius paints with uncommon force, though too often with offensive grossness, the crimes of the emperors, with their subsequent miseries and punishments. Tyrants will always detest history, and, of all historians, they will detest Suetonius.

An authentic historian of a deceased tyrant

rant must not, however, be confounded with the malevolent declaimer against royalty. But, though the most arbitrary prince cannot prevent his own posthumous disgrace, yet an honest and conscientious historian will remember, that, while he is detailing the *vices* of a king, which it is his duty to enumerate, it is his duty also carefully to avoid bringing the *office* of the king into contempt. And, while he is exposing the individual *crime*, he should never lose sight of his respect for the *authority* and *station* of him whose actions truth compels him to record in their real characters. The contrary insidious practice has of late so much prevailed, that the young reader should be put on his guard not to suffer his principles to be undermined by the affectation of indignant virtue, mock patriotism, zeal for spurious liberty, and factitious morality. It is but justice to Mr. Hume, against whose principles we have thought it a duty to bear our most decided testimony *, to allow that, in the earlier periods of English history, he

* In chap. xi.

carefully abstains from the vulgar error of always ascribing the public calamity, which he is relating, to the ambition or injustice of kings; but often attributes it, where it is often more justly due, to the insolence and oppression of the barons, or the turbulence and insubordination of the people. If he errs, it is on the contrary side.

But let those licentious anarchists, who delight to retail insipid jests, or to publish unqualified libels on kings *as* kings, cast their eyes on an uninterrupted succession of five illustrious Roman emperors, who, though not exempt from faults, some of them from vices, chiefly attributable to Paganism, yet exhibit such an unbroken continuity of great talents, and great qualities, as it would, perhaps, be difficult to find in any private family for five successive generations.

The candour of our excellent Queen Mary *, towards the biographers of princes, was exemplary. When, with an intention probably to soothe the royal ear,

* In chap. viii.

some persons, in her presence, severely condemned certain historians who had made reflections dishonourable to the memory of princes, she observed, that if the princes had given just ground for censure, the authors had done well to represent them fairly; and that other sovereigns must expect to be dealt with in the same manner, if they gave the same cause. She had even the magnanimity to wish, that all such princes would read Procopius, (an author too much addicted to blacken the memory of kings,) “because,” she observed, “however he might have exaggerated the vices he described, it would be a salutary lesson to future princes, that they themselves must expect the same treatment, when all restraint was taken off, and the dread of their power terminated with their lives.”

The late king of Prussia, who united the character of an author to that of a warrior, was of another way of thinking. He was of opinion, that the names of *good* princes alone should be recorded in history; and
that

that those of the wicked should be suffered to perish with their crimes*. Were this practice to be universally adopted, might we not presume to question whether even the illustrious name of *Frederic the Great* would be as certain, as it is at present, of being carried down to posterity?

Tacitus is the historian of philosophers, and the oracle of politicians. Highly valuable for his deep and acute reflections, in which neither the governors nor governed are spared; he is an original and profound thinker, and is admirable for the plenitude of his images, and the paucity of his words. His style is ardent, and his figures are bold. Vigour, brevity, and point, are its characteristics. He throws out a stronger likeness

* *Examen du Prince de Machiavel, by the King of Prussia*. It is curious to compare this composition of the King with his own conduct. To contrast his strong reprobation of the baneful glory of heroes, his horror of conquest, and of the cruel passions which oppress mankind; his professed admiration of clemency, meekness, justice, and compassion, with which this work abounds,—with the actual exploits of the ravager of the fertile plains of Saxony, &c. &c.!!

of a flagitious Roman in three words, than a diffuse writer would give in as many pages. In his annals he is a faithful, occasionally, indeed, a too faithful narrator; but he is also, at the same time, an honest and indignant reprovcr of the atrocious deeds which he records. In a man passionately loving liberty, virtue, and his country, we pardon, while painting the ruin of each, those dark and fullen shades with which he sometimes overcharges the picture. Had he delineated happier times, his tints would probably have been of a lighter cast. If he ever deceives, he does not, at least, ever appear to intend it; for he gives rumours as rumours, and his facts he generally grounds on the concurrent testimony of the times of which he writes. If, however, Tacitus fulfils one of the two duties which he himself prescribes to historians, that of writing without *fear*, he does not uniformly accomplish the other, that of writing without *hatred*; at least, neither his veracity nor his candour extended to his remarks on the Jews or Christians.

But, with all his diffuseness, Livy is the

writer who assists in forming the taste. With all his warmth, there is a beautiful sobriety in his narrations ; he does not magnify the action, he relates it, and pours forth, from a full urn, a copious and continued stream of varied elegance. He directs the judgment, by passing over slight things in a slight manner, and dwelling only on the prominent parts of his subject, though he has been accused of some important omissions. He keeps the attention always alive, by exhibiting passions as well as actions ; and what best indicates the hand of a master, we hang suspended on the event of his narrative, as if it were a fiction, of which the catastrophe is in the power of the writer, rather than a real history, with whose termination we are already acquainted. He is admirable no less for his humanity than his patriotism ; and he is one of the few historians, who have marked the broad line of discrimination between true and false glory, not erecting pomps, triumphs, and victories, into essentials of real greatness. He teaches patience under censure, incul-

cates a contempt of vulgar acclamation, and of all praise which is not fairly earned. One valuable superiority, which Livy possesses over his competitors, is, that in describing vice, and vicious characters, he scrupulously contrives to excite an abhorrence of both ; and his relations never leave on the mind of the reader, a propensity to the crime, or a partiality for the criminal whom he has been describing. A defect, in this acuteness of moral feeling, has been highly pernicious to the youthful reader ; and this too common admixture of impure description, even when the honest design has been to expose vice, has sensibly tainted the wholesomeness of historic composition.

Independently of those beautiful, though sometimes redundant speeches, which Livy puts into the mouths of his heroes, his eloquent and finished answers to ambassadors, furnish a species of rhetoric peculiarly applicable to a royal education.

It has been regretted by some of the critics, that Livy, after enriching his own work by the most copious plagiarisms from
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his great precursor, Polybius, commends him, in a way so frigid, as almost to amount to censure. He does not, it is true, go the length of Voltaire in his treatment of Shakespeare, who first pillages and then abuses him. The Frenchman, indeed, who spoils what he steals, acts upon the old known principle of his country highwaymen, who always murder where they rob.

If it be thought that we have too warmly recommended Heathen authors, let it be remembered, that in the hands of every enlightened preceptor, as was eminently the case with Fenelon, Pagans almost become Christian teachers by the manner in which they will be explained, elucidated, purified; and not only will the corruptions of Paganism be converted into instruction, by being contrasted with the opposite Christian graces, but the Christian system will be advantageously shewn to be almost equally at variance, with many Pagan virtues, as with all its vices.

If there were no other evidence of the value of Pagan historians, the profound at-

tention which they prove the ancients to have paid to the education of youth, would alone suffice to give them considerable weight in the eyes of every judge of sound institution. Their regard to youthful modesty, the inculcation of obedience and reserve, the exercises of self-denial, exacted from children of the highest rank, put to shame,—I will not say Christians, but many of the nominal professors of Christianity. Levity, idleness, disregard of the laws, contempt of established systems and national institutions, met with a severer reprobation in the Pagan youth, than is always found among those, in our day, who yet do not openly renounce the character of Christians.

Far be it from us, however, to take our morals from so miserably defective a standard as Pagan history affords. For though philosophy had given some admirable rules for maintaining the out-works of virtue, Christianity is the only religion which ever pretended to expel vice from the heart. The best qualities of Paganism want the best motives. Some of the overgrown Roman virtues,

virtues, also, though they would have been valuable in their just measure and degree, and in a due symmetry and proportion with other virtues, yet, by their excess, helped to produce those evils which afterwards ruined Rome; while a perfect system of morals, like the Christian, would have prevented those evils. Their patriotism was oppression to the rest of the world. Their virtue was not so much sullied by pride, as founded in it; and their justice was tinged with a savageness which bears little resemblance to the justice which is taught by Christianity.

These two simple precepts of our religion, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*;—these two principles, kept in due exercise, would, like the two powers which govern the natural world, keep the intellectual and spiritual world in order; would restrain, impel, unite, and govern it.

In considering the ancient philosophy, *how does the fine gold become dim*, before the sober lustre of that divine legislator, whose

kingdom, indeed, was not of this world, but who has taught “kings of the earth, princes, and all people,” those maxims and principles which cast into shade all the false splendours “of the antique world !” Christianity has furnished the only true practical comment on that grand position of the admirable author of the sublime, that *nothing is great the contempt of which is great*. For how can triumphs, honours, riches, power, conquest, fame, be considered as of intrinsic value by a Christian, the very *essence* of whose religion consists in being crucified to the world ; the very *aim and end* of whose religion lies in a superiority to all greatness which is to have an end with this life : the very *nature and genius* of whose religion tends to prove, that eternal life is the only adequate measure of the happiness, and immortal glory the only adequate object, of the ambition of a Christian.

CHAP. XI.

English History.—Mr. Hume.

BUT the royal pupil is not to wander always in the wide field of universal history. The extent is so vast, and the time for travelling over it so short, that after being sufficiently possessed of that general view of mankind which the history of the world exhibits, it seems reasonable to concentrate her studies, and to direct her attention to certain great leading points, and especially to those objects with which she has a natural and more immediate connexion. The history of modern Europe abounds with such objects. In Robertson's luminous view of the state of Europe, the progress of society is traced with just arrangement and philosophical precision. His admirable histories of Charles V. and of Mary Queen of Scots, separate from their great independent merit, will be read with

singular advantage in connexion with the contemporary reigns of English history. In the writings of Sully and Clarendon, may be seen how, for a long time, the passions of kings were contradicted, and often controlled by the wisdom of their ministers ; sovereigns who were not insensible to praise, nor averse from flattery, yet submitting, though sometimes with a very ill grace, to receive services rather than adulation. Ministers who consulted the good rather than the humour of their princes ; who promoted their interests, instead of gratifying their vices, and who preferred their fame to their favour.

MR. HUME.

Hume is incomparably the most informing, as well as the most elegant, of all the writers of English history. His narrative is full, well arranged, and beautifully perspicuous. Yet, he is an author who must be read with extreme caution on a political, but especially on a religious account.

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Though, on occasions where he may be trusted, because his peculiar principles do not interfere, his political reflections are usually just, sometimes profound. His account of the origin of the Gothic government is full of interest and information. He marks, with exact precision, the progress and decay of the feudal manners, when law and order began to prevail, and our constitution assumed something like a shape. His finely painted characters of Alfred and Elizabeth should be engraved on the heart of every sovereign. His political prejudices do not strikingly appear, till the establishment of the house of Stuart, nor his religious antipathies till about the distant dawn of the reformation under Henry V. From that period to its full establishment, he is perhaps more dangerous, because less ostensibly daring than some other infidel historians. It is a serpent under a bed of roses. He does not (in his *history* at least) so much ridicule religion himself, as invite others to ridicule it.

it. There is in his manner a sedateness which imposes; in his scepticism, a sly gravity, which puts the reader more off his guard than the vehemence of censure, or the levity of wit; for we are always less disposed to suspect a man who is too wise to appear angry. That same wisdom makes him too correct to *invent* calumnies, but it does not preserve him from doing what is scarcely less disingenuous. He implicitly adopts the injurious relations of those annalists who were most hostile to the reformed faith; though he must have known their accounts to be aggravated and discoloured, if not absolutely invented. He thus makes others responsible for the worst things he asserts, and spreads the mischief, without avowing the malignity. When he speaks from himself, the sneer is so cool, the irony so sober, the contempt so discreet, the moderation so insidious, the difference between Popish bigotry, and Protestant firmness, between the fury of the persecutor and the resolution of the martyr,

martyr, so little marked ; the distinctions between intolerant phrenzy and heroic zeal so melted into each other, and though he contrives to make the reader feel some indignation at the tyrant, he never leads him to feel any reverence for the sufferer ; he ascribes such a slender superiority to one religious system above another, that the young reader who does not come to the perusal with his principles formed, will be in danger of thinking that the reformation was really not worth contending for.

But, in nothing is the skill of this accomplished sophist more apparent than in the artful way in which he piques his readers into a conformity with his own views concerning religion. Human pride, he knew, naturally likes to range itself on the side of ability. He, therefore, skilfully works on this passion, by treating, with a sort of contemptuous superiority, as weak and credulous men, all whom he represents as being under the religious delusion ; and by uniformly insinuating that talents and piety belong to opposite parties.

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To the shameful practice of confounding fanaticism with real religion, he adds the disingenuous habit of accounting for the best actions of the best men, by referring them to some low motive; and affects to confound the designs of the religious and the corrupt, so artfully, that no radical difference appears to subsist between them.

It is injurious to a young mind to read the history of the reformation by any author, how accurate soever he may be in his facts, who does not see a divine power accompanying this great work; by any author who ascribes to the power, or rather to the perverseness of nature, and the obstinacy of innovation, what was in reality an effect of providential direction; by any who discerns nothing but human resources, or stubborn perseverance, where a Christian distinguishes, though with a considerable alloy of human imperfection, the operation of the Spirit of God.

Hume has a fascinating manner at the close of the life of a hero, a prince, or a states-

statefinan, of drawing up his character so elaborately as to attract and fix the whole attention of the reader; and he does it in such a way, that while he engages the mind he unsuspectedly misleads it. He makes a general statement of the vices and virtues, the good and bad actions of the person whom he paints, leaving the reader to form his own conclusions, by casting up the balance of the vices and virtues, of the good and bad actions thus enumerated: while he never once leads the reader to determine on the character by the only sure criterion, the *ruling principle*, which seemed to govern it.—This is the too prevailing method of historians; they make morals completely independent of religion, by thus weighing qualities, and letting the preponderance of the scale decide on virtue, as it were by grains and scruples: thus furnishing a standard of virtue subversive of that which Christianity establishes. This method, instead of marking the moral distinctions, blends and confounds them, by establishing character on
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an accidental difference, often depending on circumstance and occasion, instead of applying to it one eternal rule and motive of action *.

But, there is another evil into which writers far more unexceptionable than Mr. Hume often fall, that of rarely leading the mind to look beyond second causes and human agents. It is mortifying to refer them to the example of a pagan. Livy thought it no disgrace to proclaim, repeatedly, the insufficiency of man to accomplish great objects without divine assistance. *He* was not ashamed to refer events to the direction and control of providence; and when he speaks of notorious criminals, he

* If these remarks may be thought too severe by some readers for that degree of scepticism which appears in Mr. Hume's *history*, may I not be allowed to observe that he has shewn his principles so fully, in some of his other works, that we are entitled, on the ground of these works, to read with suspicion every thing he says which borders on religion?—A circumstance apt to be forgotten by many who read *only* his history.

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is not contented with describing them as transgressing against the state, but represents them as also offending against the gods.

Yet, it is proper again to notice the defects of ancient authors in their views of providential interference; a defect arising from their never clearly including a future state in their account. They seem to have conceived themselves as fairly *entitled* by their good conduct to the divine favour, which favour they usually limited to present prosperity. Whereas all notions of divine justice must of necessity be widely erroneous, in which a future retribution is not unambiguously and constantly included.

CHAP. XII.

Important Æras of English History.

As the annals of our own country furnish an object on which a royal student should be led to dwell with particular interest, it may be necessary to call the attention to certain important periods of our history and constitution, from each of which we begin to reckon a new æra; because, from that epoch, some new system of causes and effects begins to take place.

It will be proper, however, to trace the shades of alteration which intervene between these æras; for, though the national changes appear to be brought about by some one great event, yet, the event itself will be found to have been slowly working its way by causes trivial in their appearance, and gradual in their progress. For the minds of the people must be previously ripened

ripened for a change, before any material alteration is produced.—It was not the injury that Lucretia sustained, which kindled the resentment of the Romans; the previous misconduct of the Tarquins had excited in the people the spirit of that revolution. A momentary indignation brought a series of discontents to a crisis, and one public crime was seized on as the pretence for revenging a long course of oppression.—The arrival, however, of these slowly produced æras makes a sudden and striking change in the circumstances of a country, and forms a kind of distinct line of separation between the manners which precede and those which follow it.

A prince (whose chief study must be politics) ought in general to prefer contemporary historians, and even ordinary annalists, to the compilers of history who come after them. He should have recourse to the documents from which authors derive their history, rather than sit down satisfied with the history so derived. Life, however, is

too short to allow, in all cases, of this laborious process. Attention, therefore, to the minuter details of contemporary annalists, and to the original records consisting of letters and state papers, must be limited to periods of more than ordinary importance. Into these the attentive politician will dive for himself, and he will often be abundantly repaid.—The periods, for example, of the unhappy contests in the reign of the first Charles, of the restoration, and more especially of the revolution, are the turning points of our political constitution. A prince, by examining these original documents, and by making himself master of the points then at issue, would be sure to understand what are his own rights as a sovereign.

It is not by single, but by concurrent testimony, that the truth of history is established. And it is by a careful perusal of different authors who treat of the same period, that a series of historic truth will be extracted. Where they agree,
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we may trust that they are right; where they differ we must elicit truth from the collision. Thus the royal pupil, when engaged in the perusal of Clarendon, should also study some of the best writers, who are favourable to the parliamentary cause. A careful perusal of Ludlow and Whitlock; a general survey of Rushworth, or occasional reference to that author and to Thuroloze; and a cursory review of their own *lives* and *times* by Laud and Baxter, will throw great light on many of the transactions of the eventful period of the first Charles. They will shew how different the same actions appear to different men, equal in understanding and integrity.—They will enforce mutual candour and mutual forbearance, repressing the wholesale conclusions of party violence, and teaching a prince to be on his guard against the intemperate counsels of his interested or heated advisers. They will instruct a monarch in the important lesson of endeavouring to ascertain and keep in view the light in which his actions and motives will appear to his people. They

will teach him to attend carefully to the opinions and feelings, and even to the prejudices of the times; and, in obedience to a precept enjoined by divine authority for private life, and still more important to be observed in public,—“to provide things honest in the sight of all men.”

Again, while the narratives of the contemporary historians furnish facts, they who live in a succeeding age have the additional advantages, first, of a chance of greater impartiality; secondly, of a comparison with corresponding events; and thirdly, of having the tendencies of the events related, appreciated by the evidence of their actual effects. How imperfect, for example, would be the philosophical and political remarks, and how false the whole colour belonging to any history of the French revolution which might have immediately appeared*. Much lapse of time

* The French revolution, with its consequences, seem intended practically to contradict what Thucydides declared to be his design in writing history; namely, *by a faithful account of past things to assist mankind in conjecturing the future!*

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is necessary in order to reflect back light on the original tendency of events. The fermentation of political passions requires a long time to subside. The agitation continues till the events have nearly lost their interest, by the occurrence of a fresh class of events; which, in their turn, raise a new party, and excite a new interest; so that an impartial distribution of praise and censure is seldom made till those who are concerned in it have been long out of hearing. And it is an inconvenience inseparable from human things, that when writers are least able to come at the truth, they are most disposed to tell it.

It will be necessary to understand the political system of Europe, since that period particularly, when the two powers of France and Austria having arisen to a greatness, which made them mutually, as well as generally formidable, other countries, seeing the necessity for their own safety, of opposing the stronger, and supporting the weaker, conceived the idea of

that balance of power, that just equiponderance, which might preserve the security of all.

But there is a far earlier epoch to which attention ought perhaps, in the very first instance, to be directed, I mean the reign of Alfred. This is eminently a study for kings. — In Alfred, the most vigorous exertion of public justice was united with attachment to public liberty. He eagerly seized every interval of tranquillity, from the convulsions with which the state was torn, to collect materials for the most salutary institutions, which he afterwards established; he employed every moment he could snatch from the wars in which he was inevitably engaged, in introducing the arts of peace, and in turning the minds of his harassed and disorderly subjects to virtuous and industrious pursuits; in repairing the mischievous consequences of past insurrections, and wisely guarding against their return. He had to correct the habits of a people who had lived
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without laws, and without morals; and to reduce to civilization men who had been driven to subsist by chance or rapine.—By a system of jurisprudence, which united moral discipline with the execution of penal laws, he undertook to give a new direction to habits inveterately depraved.

The royal pupil will be taught to ascribe the origin of some of our best usages to these sagacious regulations; above all, the conception of that unparalleled idea which so beautifully reconciles the exact administration of justice with individual liberty: the origin of our juries evidently appearing to have first entered the mind of Alfred. The effects on the people seem to have been proportioned to the exertions of the Prince. Crimes were repressed. The most unexampled change took place in the national manners. Encouragement was held out to the reformed, while punishment kept in order the more irreclaimable. Yet, with all these strong measures, never
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was prince more tenderly alive to the liberty of the subject. And while commerce, navigation, ingenious inventions, and all the peaceful arts were promoted by him, his skill in the military tactics of that day was superior, perhaps, to that of any of his contemporaries.

To form such vast projects, not for disturbing the world, but for blessing it, — to reduce those projects, in many instances, to the most minute detail of actual execution ; to have surmounted the misfortune of a neglected education so as to make himself a scholar, a philosopher, and the moral as well as civil instructor of his people ;—all this implies such a grandeur of capacity, such an exact conception of the true character of a sovereign, such sublimity of principle, and such corresponding rectitude of practice, as fill up all our ideas of consummate greatness.—In a word, Alfred seems to have been sent into the world to realize the beautiful fiction, which poets, philosophers, and patriots, have formed
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of a perfect king. It is also worth observing, that all those various plans were both projected and executed by a monarch who, as all historians agree, had suffered more hardships than any ordinary adventurer, had fought more battles than most generals, and was the most voluminous author of his day*. And, if it should be asked by what means a single individual could accomplish such a variety of projects, the answer is simply this: It was in a good measure by an art of which little account is made, but which is perhaps of more importance in a sovereign than almost any other, at least it is one without which the brightest genius is often of little value, *a strict economy of time*.

Between the earlier life of Alfred and that of Charles II. there was, as must be observed, a striking similarity. The paths of both to the throne were equally marked

* See the character of Alfred in Hume, from which the preceding part of this account, in substance, is chiefly taken.

by such imminent dangers and “hair-breadth ’scapes,” as more resemble romance than authentic history. What a lesson had Alfred prepared for Charles! But their characters as kings, exhibited an opposition which is as strong as the resemblance in their previous fortunes. With an understanding naturally good, with that education which Alfred wanted, — with every advantage which an improved state of society could give over a barbarous one; such, notwithstanding, was the uniform tenor of the Stuart’s subsequent life, as almost to present the idea of an intended contrast to the virtues of the illustrious Saxon.

Another epoch to which the pupil’s attention should be pointed, is the turbulent and iniquitous reign of King John; whose oppression and injustice were, by the excess to which they were carried, the providential means of rousing the English spirit, and of obtaining the establishment of the great charter. This famous transaction, so
deservedly

deservedly interesting to Englishmen, bestowed or secured the most valuable civil privileges; chiefly indeed to the barons and clergy, but also to the people at large. The privileges of the latter had, antecedently, been scarcely taken into the account, and their liberties, always imperfect, had suffered much infringement by the introduction of the feudal law into England under the Norman William. For, whether they were vassals under the Barons, or vassals under the King it made little difference in their condition; which was, in fact, to the greater part, little better than a state of absolute slavery. The barons, liberal, perhaps, through policy rather than humanity, in struggling for their own liberty, were compelled to involve in one common interest, the liberty of the people; and the same laws which they demanded to secure their own protection, in some measure necessarily extended their benign influence to the inferior classes of society. Those immunities, which are essential to the well-

being of civil and social life, gradually became better secured. Injustice was restrained, tyrannical exactions were guarded against, and oppression was no longer sanctioned. This famous deed, without any violent innovation, became the mould of property, the pledge of liberty, and the guarantee of independence. As it guarded the rights of all orders of men, from the lowest to the highest, it was vigorously contended for by all; for, if it limited the power of the King, it also confirmed it, by securing the allegiance and fidelity of the subject.—It was of inestimable use by giving a determinate form and shape, “such a local habitation and a name,” to the spirit of liberty; so that the English, when, as it often happened, they claimed the recognition of their legal rights, were not left to wander in a wide field, without having any specific object, without limitation, and without direction. *They knew what to ask for*, and, obtaining that, they were satisfied. *We* surely cannot but be sensible

of the advantages which they derived from this circumstance, who have seen the effects of an opposite situation, in this very particular, illustrated so strikingly in the earlier period of the French revolution.

But, rapidity of progress seems, by the very laws of nature, to be precluded, where the benefit is to be radical and permanent. It was not, therefore, until our passion for making war within the territory of France was cured, nor until we left off tearing the bowels of our own country in the dissensions of the Yorkists and Lancastrians, after having, for near four hundred years, torn those of our neighbours; in a word, it was not until both foreign and civil fury began to cool, that in the reign of Henry VII. the people began to enjoy more real freedom, as the King enjoyed a more settled dominion, and the interests of peace and commerce substantially prevailed.—Without ascribing to this king virtues which he did not possess, the view of his reign, with all its faults, affords a kind of breathing time,

time, and sense of repose. It is from this reign that the history of the laws, and civil constitution of England become interesting; as that of our ecclesiastical constitution does from the subsequent reign. A general acquaintance with the antecedent part of our history may suffice for the royal pupil, but from these periods she cannot possess too detailed a knowledge of it.

CHAP. XIII.

Queen Elizabeth.

IT is remarkable that in France, a nation in which women have always been held in the highest consideration, their genius has never been called to its loftiest exercise. France is perhaps the only country which has never been governed by a woman. The mothers, however, of some of her sovereigns, when minors, have, during their regencies, Blanche of Castile * especially, discovered talents for government not inferior to those of most of her kings.

Anne of Austria has had her eulogists ; but in her character there seems to have been more of intrigue than of genius, or at least, than of sound sense ; and her virtues were problematical. If her talents had some splendor, they had no solidity. They produced a kind of stage effect, which was imposing, but not efficient ; and she was rather

* Mother of Louis IX.

an actress of royalty than a great queen. She was not happy in the choice of a friend. The source of all Mazarin's greatness, she supported him with inflexible attachment, and established him in more than regal power. In return, he treated her with respect as long as he stood in need of her protection, and set her aside when her support was become no longer necessary to his confirmed power.

The best queens have been most remarkable for employing great men. Among these, Zenobia, Elizabeth, and Anne stand foremost. Those who wish to derogate from the glories of a female reign, have never failed to urge, that they were owing to the wisdom of the ministers, and not to that of the queen; a censure which involves an eulogium. For, is not the choice of sagacious ministers the characteristic mark of a sagacious sovereign?—Would, for instance, Mary di Medici have chosen a Walsingham; she who made it one of the first acts of her regency to banish Sully, and to employ Concini? Or,

did it ever enter into the mind of the first Mary of England to take into her councils that Cecil, who so much distinguished himself in the cabinet of her sister?

Elizabeth's great natural capacity was, as has been before observed, improved by an excellent education. Her native vigour of mind had been early called forth by a series of uncommon trials. The circumspection she had been, from childhood, obliged to exercise, taught her prudence. The difficulties which beset her, accustomed her to self-control. Can we, therefore, doubt that the steadiness of purpose, and undaunted resolution which she manifested on almost every occasion during her long reign, were greatly to be attributed to that youthful discipline? She would probably never have acquired such an ascendancy over the mind of others, had she not early learned so absolute a command over her own.

On coming to the crown, she found herself surrounded with those obstacles which display great characters, but overset

ordinary minds. The vast work of the reformation, which had been undertaken by her brother Edward, but crushed in the very birth, as far as was within human power, by the bigot Mary, was resumed and accomplished by Elizabeth; and that, not in the calm of security, not in the fulness of undisputed power, but even while that power was far from being confirmed, and that security was liable, every moment, to be shaken by the most alarming commotions. She had prejudices, apparently insurmountable, to overcome; she had heavy debts to discharge; she had an almost ruined navy to repair; she had a debased coin to restore; she had empty magazines to fill; she had a decaying commerce to invigorate; she had an exhausted exchequer to replenish.—All these, by the blessing of God on the strength of her mind, and the wisdom of her councils, she accomplished. She not only paid her own debts, but, without any great additional burdens on her subjects, she discharged those also which were due to the people from her two immediate predecessors.

predecessors. At the same time, she fostered genius, she encouraged literature, she attracted all the great talents of the age within the sphere of her own activity. And, though she constantly availed herself of all the judgment and talents of her ministers, her acquiescence in their measures was that of conviction, never of implicit confidence.

Her exact frugality may not, by superficial judges, be reckoned among the shining parts of her character. Yet, those who see more deeply, must allow, that it was a quality from which the most important benefits were derived to her people; and without which, all her great abilities would have been comparatively inefficient. The parsimony of her grandfather was the rapine and exaction of an extortioner; hers, the wise œconomy of a provident parent. If we are to judge of the value of actions by their consequences, let us compare the effects upon the country, of the prodigality, both of her father, and of her successor, with her own frugality. As

it has been asserted by Plutarch*, that the money idly thrown away by the Athenians on the representations of two dramatic poets only, amounted to a larger sum than had been expended on all their wars against the Persians, in defence of their liberty; so it has been affirmed, that the first James spent more treasure on his favourites, than it had cost Elizabeth to maintain all her wars. Yet, there have not been wanting historians, who have given the praise of liberality to James, and especially to Henry, while Elizabeth has suffered the imputation of avarice. But we ought to judge of good and evil, by their own weight and measure, and not by the specious names which the latter can assume, nor by the injurious terms which may be bestowed on the former.

It is not from the spleenetic critic in retired life, from the declaimer, ignorant

* In his enquiry whether the Athenians were more eminent in the arts of war or peace.

of the duties and the requisitions of princes, that we should take our sentiments on the point of royal œconomy; but from men, who, however possessing different characters and views, yet agree in this one respect, that their exalted public situations, and great personal experience, enable them to give a fair and sound opinion. The judgment even of the Emperor Tiberius was not so impaired by his vices, but that he could insist, that an exchequer, exhausted by prodigality, must be replenished by oppression. Cicero, versed in public business, no less than in the knowledge of mankind, affirms, that “a liberal prince loses more hearts than he gains, and that the resentment of those from whom he takes the money, is much stronger than the gratitude of those to whom he gives it.” And, on another occasion he says, that “men are not aware what a rich treasury frugality is.” The same sentiments seem to have been adopted by another Roman statesman, a royal favourite too. Pliny affirms, that “a prince will

be pardoned, who gives nothing to his subjects, provided he takes nothing away from them.”

Those princes, who, despising frugality, have been prodigal for the sake of a little temporary applause, have seldom achieved lasting good. And, allowing that this lavish generosity may be for the moment a popular quality ; yet, there is scarcely any thing which has contributed to bring more calamities on a state, than the means used for enabling the prince to indulge it. It was not in Rome alone, as recent instances testify, that when the government has wanted money, the rich have been always found to be the guilty. A prodigal generosity, as we have seen in the case of Cæsar, and in our own time, may be a useful instrument for paving the way to a throne ; but an established sovereign will find œconomy a more certain means of keeping him in it. The Emperor Nero was extolled for the felicity which he was diffusing by his bounty, while Rome was groaning under
the

the burthen of his exactions. That liberality which would make a prince necessitous, and a people poor, would, by hurting his fame, weaken his influence; for reputation is power. After all, such a care and improvement of the revenue, as will enable him to spare his subjects, is the truest liberality in a prince.

But, to return.—The distinguishing qualities of Elizabeth appear to have been œconomy, prudence, and moderation. Yet in some instances, the former was rigid, not to say unjust*. Nor had her frugality always the purest motive. She was, it is true, very unwilling to trouble parliament for money, for which, indeed, they were extremely unwilling to be troubled; but her desire to keep herself independent of them seems to have been the motive for this forbearance. What she might have gained in supplies she must have lost in power.

To her moderation and that middle line

* Particularly her keeping the see of Ely vacant nineteen years, in order to retain the revenue.

of conduct which she observed, much of her success may be ascribed. To her moderation in the contests between papists and puritans, it is chiefly to be attributed, that the reformation issued in a happier medium in England, than in any other country. — To her moderation, in respect to foreign war, from which she was singularly averse, may be ascribed that rapid improvement at home, which took place under her reign. — If we were to estimate Elizabeth as a private female, she would doubtless appear entitled to but little veneration. If as an instrument raised up by divine Providence to carry through the most arduous enterprises in the most difficult emergencies, we can hardly rate her too highly. We owe her much as Englishmen. As Protestants, what do we not owe her? If we look at the woman, we shall see much to blame; if at the sovereign, we shall see almost every thing to admire. Her great faults, though they derogated from her personal character, seldom deeply affected her administration. In one instance

stance only, her favouritism was prejudicial to the state; her appointment of Leicester to the naval command, for which he was utterly unfit. — On many occasions, as we have elsewhere observed, her very passions supplied what was wanting in principle. Thus, her violent attachments might have made her indiscriminately lavish, if they had not been counteracted by that parsimoniousness which never forsook her. Accordingly, in the midst of her lamentations for the death of Leicester, we see her grief did not make her forget to seize his goods, and to repay herself for what she had lent him.

Our censures, therefore, must not be lost in our admiration, nor must our gratitude warp our judgment. And it may be useful to inquire how it came to pass that Elizabeth, with so much power, so much prudence, and so much popularity, should at length become completely miserable, and die, neglected and forsaken, her sun setting
inglo-

ingloriously after so bright a day of prosperity and honour.

May we not venture to attribute it to the defectiveness, not to say, unsoundness, of her moral principles? Though corrupt principles for a certain period may conceal themselves, and even dazzle, by the success of the projects to which, in the view of superficial reasoners, they may have appeared conducive; they will, in a long course of action, betray their intrinsic weakness. They may not entirely have prevented the public good effects of other useful qualities with which they were associated; but they do most fatally operate against the personal honour of the individual; and against her reaping that harvest of gratitude and respect, to which she might otherwise have been so justly entitled.

Vanity was, too probably, the spring of some of Elizabeth's most admired actions; but the same vanity also produced that jealousy, which terminated in the death of
Mary.

Mary. It was the same vanity which led her first to court the admiration of Essex, and then to suffer him to fall a victim to her wounded pride. Her temper was uncontrolled. While we pardon her ignorance of the principles of liberty, we should not forget how little she respected the privileges of parliament, claiming a right of imprisoning its very members, without deigning to give any account of her proceedings.

Policy was her favourite science, but in that day a liberal policy was not understood ; and Elizabeth was too apt to substitute both simulation and dissimulation for an open and generous conduct. This dissimulation at length lost her the confidence of her subjects, and while it inspired her with a distrust, it also forfeited the attachment, of her friends. Her insincerity, as was natural, infected those around her. The younger Cecil himself was so far alienated from his royal mistress, and tainted with the prevailing spirit of intrigue, as to be secretly corresponding with her rival James.

That

That such mortifying occurrences were too likely to arise, from the very nature of existing circumstances, where the dying prince was the last of her race, and the nearly vacant throne about to be possessed by a stranger, must assuredly be allowed.— But it may still be asserted, that nothing but deficiency of moral character could have so desolated the closing scene of an illustrious princess. Real virtue will, in every rank, draw upon it disinterested regard; and a truly virtuous sovereign will not be shut out from a more than ordinary share in this general blessing. It is honourable to human nature to see the dying William pressing to his bosom the hand of Bentinck; but it will be still more consolatory as well as instructive to compare, with the forsaken death-bed of Elizabeth, the exemplary closing scene of the second Mary as described by Burnet, an eye-witness of the affecting event which he relates.

CHAP. XIV.

Moral Advantages to be derived from the Study of History, independent of the Examples it exhibits.—History proves the corruption of Human Nature.—It demonstrates the superintending Power of Providence—illustrated by Instances.

THE knowledge of great events and splendid characters, and even of the customs, laws, and manners of different nations; an acquaintance, however accurate, with the state of the arts, sciences, and commerce of those nations, important as is this knowledge, must not however be considered as of primary importance in the study of history. There are still higher uses to which that study may be turned. History furnishes a strong practical illustration of one of the fundamental doctrines of our religion, the corruption of human nature.

nature. To this truth it constantly bears witness by exemplifying it under every shape, and shade, and colour, and gradation : the annals of the world, indeed, from its commencement to the present hour, presenting little else than a strongly interwoven tissue of those corruptions, and their attendant calamities.

History every where proves the helplessness and natural inability of man, the insufficiency of all such moral principles as can be derived from nature and experience ; the necessity of explicit instruction respecting our true happiness, and of divinely communicated strength in order to its attainment ; and consequently, the inconceivable worth of that life and immortality, which are so fully brought to light by the Gospel.

That reader looks to little purpose over the eventful page of history, who does not accustom himself to mark therein the finger of the Almighty, governing kings and kingdoms ; prolonging or contracting the duration of empires ; tracing out before

hand, in the unimpeachable page of the prophet Daniel*, an outline of successive empires, which subsequent events have realized with the most critical exactness; and describing their eventual subservience to the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, with a circumstantial accuracy which the well-informed Christian, who is versed in Scripture language, and whose heart is interested in the subject, reads with unutterable and never-ceasing astonishment.

* The parts of the book of Daniel chiefly alluded to, are Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation of it, in the 2d chapter; and his own vision of the four beasts, in the 8th. These two passages alone, preserved as they have been, by the most inveterate enemies of Christianity, amount to an irrefragable demonstration that our religion is divine. One of the most ancient and most learned opposers of Revelation is said to have denied the possibility of these prophecies having existed before the events. But we know they *did* exist, and no modern infidel *dares* to dispute it. But, in admitting this, however they may take refuge in their own inconsequence of mind, they inevitably, though indirectly, allow the truth of Christianity.

It is, in fact, this wonderful correspondence which gives its highest value to the more ancient half of the historic series. What would it profit us, at this day, to learn from Xenophon, that the Assyrian monarch had subjugated all those countries, with the exception of Media, which spread eastward from the Mediterranean, if it were not that, by this statement, he confirms that important portion of sacred and prophetic history? And to what solidly useful purpose would the same historian's detail of the taking of Babylon be applicable, if it did not forcibly as well as minutely, illustrate the almost equally detailed denunciations of the prophet Isaiah? It was partly for the purpose of elucidating this correspondence between sacred prophecy and ancient history; and shewing, by how regular a providential chain the successive empires of the ancient world were connected with each other, and ultimately with Christianity, that the excellent Rollin composed his well-known work: and the impression which

which his researches left upon his own mind, may be seen in those sublimely pious remarks with which his last volume is concluded.

A careful perusal of the historical and prophetic parts of Scripture will prepare us for reading prophane history with great advantage. In the former we are admitted within the veil. We are informed how the vices of nations drew down on them the wrath of the Almighty; and how some neighbouring potentate was employed as the instrument of divine vengeance. How his ambition, his courage, and military skill were but the means of fulfilling the divine prediction, or of inflicting the divine punishment. How, when the mighty conqueror, the executioner of the sentence of Heaven, had performed his assigned task, he was put aside, and was himself, perhaps, in his turn, humbled and laid low. Such are the familiar incidents of historic and prophetic Scripture. But, in addition to the stock of knowledge which we receive from

thence, we shall have learned in the divine school to little purpose, if we do not find the benefit of our studies in the general impression and habits of mind which we derive from them ; if we do not open our eyes to the agency of Providence in the varying fortunes of nations, and in the talents, characters, and fates of the chief actors in the great drama of life.

Do we read in the prophetic page the solemn call and designation of Cyrus ? — Let us learn to recognize no less, as the instrument of the Almighty, a Gustavus, and a Marlborough ! Are we many hundred years before, informed by Him who can alone see the end from the beginning, of the military exploits of the conqueror of Babylon, and the overturner of the Assyrian empire ? — Let us learn to refer no less to that same All-disposing Power, the victories of Lützen and of Blenheim, the humiliation of Austrian arrogance, and of French ambition.

Another

Another important end of the study of general history, distinct from that which has just been mentioned, but by no means unconnected with it, is the contemplation of divine wisdom and goodness, as exercised in gradually civilizing the human race, through the instrumentality of their own agitation. In this view the mind of the pupil should be particularly led to observe that mysterious, yet most obvious operation of Providence, by which, through successive ages, the complicated chaos of human agency has been so over-ruled as to make all things work together for general good : the hostile collision of nations being often made conducive, almost in its immediate consequences, to their common benefit, and often rendered subservient to the general improvement, and progressive advancement of the great commonwealth of mankind.

If this view, respecting the world at large, should be deemed too vast for satisfactory

consideration, it may be limited to that part with which we are most nearly connected; and to which it is hardly too bold to say, that Divine Providence itself has, during the latter ages of the world, seemed to direct its chief attention—I mean the Continent of Europe. Let it simply be asked, what was the state of this Continent two thousand years ago? The answer must be—from the Alps to the Frozen Ocean, a moral as well as physical wilderness.—That the human powers were formed for extended exercise, and in some sense for boundless improvement, the very contemplation of those powers is sufficient to evince. But that improvement had not then begun, nor was the frost of their dreariest winter more benumbing than that in which their minds had been for ages locked up. To what then but a regular design of Providence can we attribute the amazing change? And it is doubtless the part, no less of religious gratitude than of philosophical curiosity, to inquire into the series.

series of instrumental causes by which the transformation was effected. This interesting and most instructive intelligence is conveyed to us by history. We mark the slow but steady developement of the wise and benevolent plan. We see the ambition of Rome breaking up the soil with its resistless plough-share, and scattering even through these British isles the first seeds of civilization. We see the northern invaders burst forth with irresistible violence, bringing back, to all human appearance, the former desolation; but, in reality, conducting, though with an operation like that of lava from a volcano, to a richer harvest of social and civil happiness. We see all that was really valuable spring up again afresh, mingled with new principles of utility and comfort; and above all, quickened and enriched by the wide-spread influences of a pure and heavenly religion. We see the violent passions providentially let loose, when it was necessary for society to be roused from a pernicious torpor.—We see an enthusias-

tic rage for conquests in Asia, inducing an activity of mind, and enlargement of view, out of which eventually grew commerce, liberty, literature, philosophy, and at length, even religious reformation. In brief, if in our perusal of history, we take true wisdom for our guide, we shall not only be instructed by that gracious progressiveness which is discernible in past events, but, notwithstanding the awful concussions of the present period, we shall learn to trust Almighty wisdom and goodness for what is to come. And we shall be ready to indulge the hope of a yet greatly increased happiness of mankind, when we consider, that the hand which brought us from barbarism to our present circumstances is still over us; —that progression to still better habits is equally possible, and equally necessary; and that no means were rendered more conducive to such progress, in the period which is passed, than the agitations of the same awful and afflictive kind which we are now doomed to contemplate.

It

It will be seen that the same infinite wisdom often permits human evils to balance each other, and in subservience to his grand purpose of general good, not only sets good against evil, but often, where the counteracting principle of religion seems wholly suspended, prevents any fatal preponderance in the scale of human affairs, by allowing one set of vices to counterbalance another.—Thus, societies, which appear, on a general view, to have almost wholly thrown off the divine government, are still preserved for better things, or perhaps, for the sake of the righteous few, who still remain in them, by means of those exertions which bad men make from selfish motives; or by the vigilance with which one party of bad men watches over another. The clash of parties, and the opposition of human opinion, are likewise often over-ruled for good. The compages of the public mind, if we may use such a term, are no less kept together, than the component parts of matter, by opposite tendencies.

tendencies. And, as all human agents are nothing but the instruments of God, he can with equal efficacy, though doubtless not with the same complacency, cause the effects of evil passions to be counteracted by each other, as well as by the opposite virtues. For instance, were it not for indolence and the dread of difficulty and danger, ambition would deluge the world in blood. The love of praise, and the love of indulgence, assist, through their mutual opposition, to keep each other in order. Avarice and voluptuousness are almost as hostile to each other, as either is to the opposite virtues ; therefore, by pulling different ways, they contribute to keep the world in equipoise. Thus, the same divine hand, which had so adjusted the parts and properties of matter, as that their apparent opposition produces, not disruption, but harmony, and promotes the general order, has also conceived, through the action and counteraction of the human mind, that no jar of passion, no abuse of free agency, shall

shall eventually defeat the wise and gracious purposes of heaven.

For an illustration of these remarks, we scarcely need go farther than the character of our own heroic Elizabeth. Her passions were naturally of the strongest kind; and it must be acknowledged, that they were not always under the control of principle. To what then can we so fairly ascribe the success which, even in such instances, attended her, as to the effect of one strong passion forcibly operating upon another? Inclinations which were too violent to be checked by reason were met and counteracted by opposite inclinations of equal violence; and through the direction of providence, the passion finally predominant was generally favourable to the public good.

Do we then mean to admit, that the Almighty approves of these excesses in individuals, by which his wisdom often works for the general benefit? God forbid. Nothing surely could be less approved by him,

him, than the licentiousness and cruelty of our eighth Henry, though He over-ruled those enormities for the advantages of the community, and employed them, as his instruments for restoring good government, and for introducing, and at length establishing, the reformation. England enjoys the inestimable blessing, but the monarch is not the less responsible personally for his crimes. We are equally certain, that God did not approve of the insatiable ambition of Alexander, or of his incredible acquisition of territory by means of unjust wars. Yet, from that ambition, those wars, and those conquests, how much may the condition of mankind have been meliorated? The natural humanity of this hero, which he had improved by the study of philosophy under one of the greatest masters in the world, disposed him to turn his conquests to the benefit of mankind. He founded seventy cities, says his historian, so situated as to promote commerce and diffuse civilization.

zation. Plutarch* observes, that had those nations not been conquered, Egypt would have had no Alexandria, Mesopotamia no Seleucia. He also informs us, that Alexander introduced marriage into one conquered country, and agriculture into another ; that one barbarous nation, which used to eat their parents, was led by him to reverence and maintain them ; that he taught the Persians to respect, and not to marry their mothers ; the Scythians to bury, and not to eat their dead.

There was, on the whole, something so extraordinary in the career of this monarch, and in the results to which it led, that his historian Arrian, amidst all the darkness of Paganism, was induced to say, that Alexander seemed to have been given to the world by a peculiar dispensation of Providence.

Did the same just Providence approve of the usurpation of Augustus over his fallen

* Quoted by Gillies, vol. iii. p. 385.

country ?

country? No—but Providence employed it as the means of restoring peace to remote provinces, which the tyrannical republic had so long harassed and oppressed; and also, of establishing a general uniformity of law, and a facility of intercourse between nation and nation; which were signally subservient to the diffusion of that divine religion, which was so soon to enlighten and to bless mankind.

To adduce one or two instances more, where thousands might be adduced.—Did the Almighty approve those frantic wars, which arrogated to themselves the name of *holy*? Yet, with all the extravagance of the enterprize, and the ruinous failure which attended its execution, many beneficial consequences, as has been already intimated, were permitted, incidentally, to grow out of them. The Crusaders, as their historians demonstrate*, beheld in their march countries in which civilization had made

* See especially Robertson's State of Europe.

a greater progress than in their own. They saw foreign manufactures in a state of improvement to which they had not been accustomed at home. They perceived remains of knowledge in the East, of which Europe had almost lost sight. Their native prejudices were diminished in witnessing improvements to which the state of their own country presented comparative barbarity. The first faint gleam of light dawned on them, the first perceptions of taste and elegance were awakened, and the first rudiments of many an art were communicated to them, by this personal acquaintance with more polished countries. Their views of commerce were improved, and their means of extending it were enlarged.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the excess to which the popes carried their usurpation, and the Romish clergy their corruptions, was, by the Providence of God, the immediate cause of the reformation. The taking of Constantinople by the Turks, though, in itself, a most de-

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plorable

plorable scene of crimes and calamities, became the occasion of most important benefits to our countries, by compelling the only accomplished scholars then in the world to seek an asylum in the western parts of Europe. To these countries they carried with them the Greek language, which ere long proved one of the providential means of introducing the most important event that has occurred since the first establishment of Christianity.

May we not *now* add to the number of instances in which Providence has over-ruled the crimes of men for good, a recent exemplification of the doctrine, in the ambition of that person, who, by his unjust assumption of imperial power in a neighbouring nation, has, though unintentionally, almost annihilated the wild outcry of false liberty, and the clamour of mad democracy?

All those contingent events which lie without the limits and calculation of human foresight; all those variable loose uncertainties

ainties which men call chance, has God taken under his own certain disposal and absolute control. To reduce uncertainty to method, confusion to arrangement, and contingency to order, is solely the prerogative of Almighty power.

Nothing can be further from the intention of these remarks, than to countenance, in the slightest degree, the doctrine of optimism in the sense in which it was maintained by Mr. Pope. Far be it from the writer, to intimate that the good, which has thus providentially been produced out of evil, is greater than the good, which would have been produced had no such evil been committed ; or to insinuate, that the crimes of men do not diminish the quantity of good which is enjoyed. This would, indeed, be to furnish an apology for vice. That God *can* and *does* bring good out of evil, is unquestionably true ; but to affirm, that he brings more, or so much good out of evil as he would have brought out of good, had good been practised, would be indeed a dangerous position.

If, therefore, God often “ educes good from ill,” yet man has no right to count upon his always doing it, in the same degree in which he appoints that good shall be productive of good. To resume the illustration, therefore, from a few of the instances already adduced; what an extensive blessing might Alexander, had he acted with other views and to other ends, have proved to that world, whose happiness be impaired by his ambition, and whose morals he corrupted by his example! —How much more effectually, and immediately, might the reformation have been promoted, had Henry, laying aside the blindness of prejudice, and subduing the turbulence of passion, been the zealous and consistent supporter of the Protestant cause; the virtuous husband of one virtuous wife, and the parent of children *all* educated in the sound principles of the reformation! —Again, had the popes effectually reformed themselves, how might the unity of the church have been promoted ;
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and even the schisms, which have arisen in Protestant communities, been diminished ! It would be superfluous to recapitulate other instances ; these, it is presumed, being abundantly sufficient to obviate any charge of the most distant approach towards the fatal doctrine of Necessity.

CHAP. XV.

On the distinguishing Characters of Christianity.

THE great leading truths of Scripture are few in number, though the spirit of them is diffused through every page.—The being and attributes of the Almighty; the spiritual worship which he requires; the introduction of natural and moral evil into the world; the restoration of man; the life, death, character, and offices of the Redeemer; the holy example he has given us; the divine system of ethics which he has bequeathed us; the awful sanctions with which they are enforced; the spiritual nature of the eternal world; the necessity of repentance; the pardon of sin through faith in a Redeemer; the offer of divine assistance; and the promise of eternal life. The Scripture describes a multitude of persons who exemplify its truths; whose
lives

lives bear testimony to the perfection of the divine law ; and whose characters, however clouded with infirmity, and subject to temptation, yet, acting under its authority and influence, evince, by the general tenor of their conduct, that they really embraced religion as a governing principle of the heart, and as the motive to all virtue in the life.

In forming the mind of the royal pupil, an early introduction to these Scriptures, the depository of such important truths, will doubtless be considered as a matter of prime concern. And, as her mind opens, it will be thought necessary to point out to her, how one great event led to another still greater ; till at length we see a series accomplished, and an immovable foundation laid for our faith and hope, which includes every essential principle of moral virtue and genuine happiness.

To have given rules for moral conduct might appear, to mere human wisdom, the aptest method of improving our nature.

And, accordingly, we find such a course generally pursued by the ancient moralists, both of Greece and Asia. Of this, it is not the least inconvenient result, that rules must be multiplied to a degree the most burthensome and perplexing. And there would be, after all, a necessity for incessant alteration, as the rules of one age could not be expected to correspond with the manners of another. This inconvenience might, perhaps, in some degree be avoided, by entailing on a people an undeviating sameness of manners. But, even when this has been effected, how oppressively minute, and how disgustingly trivial are the authorized codes of instruction ! Of this, every fresh translation from the moral writings of the East is an exemplification ; as if the mind could be made pure by overloading the memory !

It is one of the perfections of revealed religion, that, instead of multiplying rules, it establishes principles. It traces up right conduct into a few radical dispositions, which,

which, when once fully formed, are the natural sources of correspondent temper and action. To implant these dispositions, then, is the leading object of what we may venture to call the Scripture philosophy. And as the heart must be the seat of that which is to influence the whole man, so it is chiefly to the heart that the holy Scriptures address themselves. Their object is to make us *love* what is *right*, rather than to occupy our understandings with its theory. *Knowledge puffeth up*, says one of our divine instructors, but it is Love that edifieth. And the principle which is here assumed, will be found most strictly true, that if a love of goodness be once thoroughly implanted, we shall not need many rules; but we shall act aright from what we may almost call a noble kind of instinct. “If thine eye be single,” says our Saviour, “thy whole body shall be full of light.” Our religion, as taught in the Scripture, does, in this very instance, evince its heavenly origin. St. Paul, whose peculiar

province it seems to have been, to explain, as it were scientifically, the great doctrines of his master, gives us a definition of Christianity, which out-does at once in brevity, in fullness, and even in systematic exactness, all which has been achieved in the art of epitomizing, by the greatest masters of human science,—*Faith which worketh by love.*

It is not too much to affirm, that this expression substantially contains the whole scope and tenor of both Testaments; the substance of all morality, and the very life and soul of human virtue and happiness. A want of attention to what St. Paul means by *faith*, too generally makes the sense of the passage be overlooked. But the well-directed student will discern, that St. Paul assumes exactly what has been intimated above, that God's object in Revelation is not *merely* to convey his *will*, but also to manifest *himself*; not *merely* to promulgate laws for restraining or regulating conduct; but to display his *own* nature and attributes,

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so as to bring back to himself the hearts and affections of fallen man ; and that, accordingly, he means by faith, the effectual and impressivè apprehension of God, thus manifested. In his language, it is not a notion of the intellect, nor a tradition coldly residing in the recollection, which the Scriptures exhibit, but an actual persuasion of the divine realities. It is, in short, such a conviction of what is revealed, as gives it an efficacy equal, for every practical purpose, to that which is derived through the evidence of our senses.

Faith, then, in St. Paul's language, is religion in its simplest, inward principle. It is the deep and efficacious impressiôn, which the manifestation of God, made to us in the Scripture, ought in all reason to produce in our hearts ; but which it does not produce until, in answer to our earnest prayer, his holy Spirit " opens, as it were, " our hearts," to receive the things which are thus presented to our minds. When the unseen realities of religion are able to
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do more with us than the tempting objects of this visible world, then and not before, is the divine grace of faith really formed within us.

That this is the scriptural idea of faith, will appear at once, from a perusal of that most interesting portion of Scripture, the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. The definition, with which the chapter commences, states this precise notion :—" Faith is the *substantiation* of things hoped for, the *demonstration* of things not seen *." And the instances adduced are most satisfactory exemplifications. " By faith, Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, being moved with fear, prepared an ark," &c. " By faith, Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invi-

* I thus venture to strengthen the expressions in the authorized translation, in order to convey some clearer idea of the original terms, which, as the best critics allow, have, perhaps, a force to which no English words can do justice.

ble."

sible." "With the heart," says St. Paul, "man believeth unto righteousness;" that is, when the infinitely awful and inexpressibly engaging views of God, manifesting himself in the Scripture, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, really and effectually impress themselves on our hearts, so as to become the paramount principle of inward and outward conduct; then, and not before, we are, in the Scripture sense, believers. And this faith, if real, must produce love; for, when our minds and hearts are thus impressed, our affections must of necessity yield to that impression. If virtue, said a heathen, could be seen with human eyes, what astonishing love would it excite in us! St. Paul's divine faith realizes this very idea. If Moses "endured as *seeing* him who is invisible," it could only be, because, in seeing God, he beheld what filled up his whole soul, and so engaged his hopes and fears, but, above all, his love, as to raise him above the low allurements of the world, and the puny menaces

menaces of mortals. It is said of him, that “ he accounted even the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt ;” a preference which implies the strongest *affection*, as well as the deepest *conviction*. His case, then, clearly illustrate what St. Paul says of *faith working by love* ; his apprehension of God being so deep and lively, as to fix his supreme love on that supreme excellence, which was thus, as it were, visible to his mind ; the current of his temper, and the course of his actions, followed this paramount direction of his heart.

The Scripture then, in reality, does not so much *teach us how* to be virtuous, as, if we comply with its intention, actually *makes us so*. It is St. Paul’s argument through the Epistle to the Romans, that even the most perfect code of laws which could be given, would fall infinitely short of our exigencies, if it only gave the rules, without inspiring the disposition.

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The law of Moses had afforded admirable moral precepts, and even the sages of the heathen world had found out many excellent maxims; but, an inspiring principle, by which men might be made to *love* goodness as well as to *know* it, was that of which the Gentiles, and, in some measure the Jews also, stood in need. And to furnish this principle by inspiring such a faith in God, as must produce love to God, and, by producing love to God, become operative in every species of virtue, is avowedly the supreme object of the Gospel of Christ.

And, therefore, it is, that the Scripture represents to us *facts*, and doctrines founded on facts rather than *theories*; because facts are alone fitted to work on the heart. In theories, the understanding acts for itself; in apprehending facts, it acts subserviently to the higher powers of the soul, merely furnishing to the affections those objects for which they naturally look; and distinguishing false and seductive appearances from
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real sources of delight and comfort. In this way the sacred Scriptures make the fullest use of our rational powers, uniformly presenting such facts, as grow clearer the more severely they are examined : completely satisfying our understandings, as to their aptness to the great purpose of working on our hearts, and, on the whole making our religion as reasonable, as if, like mathematical truth, it had been exclusively addressed to our intellect ; while its influence on the rightly disposed heart gives such an inward proof of its divinity as no merely rational scheme could, in the nature of things, possess.

Let, then, the royal pupil be carefully taught, that Christianity is not to be examined, nor the sacred Scriptures perused, as if they were merely to be believed, and remembered, and held in speculative reverence. But, let it rather be impressed upon her, that the holy Scriptures are God's great means of producing in her heart, that awe of his presence, that reverence of his majesty,

jeſty, that delight in his infinite perfections, that practical affectionate knowledge of the only true God, and of Jeſus Chriſt whom he has ſent, which conſtitutes the *reſt*, the *peace*, the *ſtrength*, the *light*, the *conſolation* of every ſoul which attains to it. Let her be taught to regard the oracles of God, not merely as a light to guide her ſteps, but, as a ſacred fire to animate and invigorate her inmoſt ſoul. A purifying flame, like that upon the altar, from whence the ſeraph conveyed the coal to the lips of the prophet, who cried out, “Lo ! this hath touched my lips, and mine iniquity is taken away, and my ſin is purged.”

That fear of God, which the Scripture, when uſed as it ought, never fails to inſpire, is felt by the poſſeſſor to be eſſential wiſdom ; and that love of God, which it is no leſs fitted to excite, is equally acknowledged by him whom it influences, to be at once eſſential virtue, and eſſential happineſs ; and both united, are found to be that pure element in which rational intelli-

gences are formed to live, and out of which they must ever be perturbed and miserable.

But, to make the Scripture thus efficacious, it must be studied according to the will of him who gave it. It is said of our Saviour in the instance of his disciples,—“Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures;” and it is said of Lydia, Saint Paul’s first convert at Philippi, “That the Lord opened her heart, to attend to the things which were spoken of Paul.” We read of others of whom it is observed, “The Gospel was preached, but it did not profit them, because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it.” What follows? evidently, that the Scripture, to be read effectually, must be read devoutly; with earnest and constant prayer to him whose word it is, that he would so impress it on our hearts, by his good spirit, that it may indeed become the power of God unto salvation. “If any man lack wisdom let him ask it of God,”

God," says St. James, "who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

But, one grand peculiarity of Christianity remains to be mentioned,—That it addresses us not merely as ignorant, but as prejudiced and corrupt ; as needing not merely instruction, but reformation. This reformation can be accomplished, these prejudices and these corruptions can be removed, only by divine power. It is a new creation of the soul, requiring no less than its original formation, the hand of the divine artificer. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God ; they are foolishness unto him." God must reveal them by his spirit ; he must produce the disposition to receive them.

To this end no kind of previous knowledge is more conducive than the knowledge of ourselves as fallen, depraved, and helpless creatures ; and, therefore, absolutely requiring some such gracious interposition

in our favour, as that which the Scripture offers. Exactly as the malady is felt, will the remedy be valued ; and, consequently, no instruction can be more indispensable for the royal pupil, than that which tends to impress on her mind, that in this respect she stands on a level with the meanest of her fellow-creatures. That, from the natural corruption of every human heart, whatever amiable qualities an individual may possess, each carries about with him a root of bitterness, which, if not counteracted by the above means, will spread itself through the whole soul, disfigure the character, and disorder the life ; that this malignant principle, while predominant, will admit but of a shadowy and delusive semblance of virtue, which temptation ever dissipates, and from which the heart never receives solid comfort. Who can enumerate the hourly calamities which the proud, the self-willed, the voluptuous, are inflicting on themselves ; which rend and lacerate the bosom, while no eye perceives it ? Who

can exprefs the daily difappointment, the alternate fever and laffitude of him, whose heart knows of no reft, but what this difordered world can afford ?

Who then is happy ? He alone, whether prince or fubject, who, through the powerful and falutary influence of revealed religion on his heart, is fo impreffed with things invifible, as to rife fuperior to the viciffitudes of mortality : who fo believes and feels what is contained in the Bible, as to make God his refuge, his Saviour his truft, and true practical holinefs the chief object of his purfuit. To fuch a one his Bible, and his clofet, are a counterpoife to all the trials and the violence to which he may be expofed. “ Thou fhalt hide them privily,” fays the Pfalmift, “ by thine own prefence, from the provoking of all men ; thou fhalt keep them fecretly in thy pavilion from the ftrife of tongues.”

CHAP. XVI.

*On the Scripture Evidences of Christianity.—
The Christian Religion peculiarly adapted
to the Exigencies of Man; and especially
calculated to supply the Defects of Heathen
Philosophy.*

IF Christianity were examined with attention and candour, it would be found to contain irresistible evidence of its divine origin. Those who have formed continued trains of argument in its support, have, no doubt, often effected very valuable purposes; but it is certain, that conviction may be attained in a much simpler method. In fact, it would imply a very reasonable charge against Christianity, if its proofs were of such a nature, that none but scholars or philosophers could feel their conclusiveness.

A book

A book exists in the world, purporting to contain the authentic records, and authoritative principles of the one true religion. It is obviously the work not of one person, or of one age. Its earliest pages, on the contrary, are, beyond all sober question, the most ancient writings in the world ; while its later parts were confessedly composed at a time much within the limits of historic certainty ; a time indeed, with which we are better acquainted than with any other period in the retrospect of ancient history ; and which, like a distant eminence brightly illuminated by the rays of the sun, is distinctly seen, while intermediate tracts are involved in impenetrable mist.

Against the authority of this most interesting volume, numberless objections have been raised. But, who has yet clearly and satisfactorily shewn how its existence, in the form it bears, can be rationally accounted for, on the supposition of its spuriousness ? That a series of records originating so variously both as to time, occasion,

and circumstance, should involve some obscurity or difficulty, or even in some instances, apparent incongruity, is surely no cause of wonder: and, that these should be dwelt upon and exaggerated, by persons hostile to the principles which the volume contains, and which its truth would establish, is most natural. But, which of those objectors has ever been able to substitute a system less liable to objection? Have any of them given a satisfactory solution of the unparalleled difficulties which clog *their* hypothesis? Which of them has even attempted fully to explain the simple phenomenon of such a volume being in the world, on the supposition of fabrication or imposture?

This book divides itself into two great portions, the first containing the account of a preparatory religion, given to a single nation; the latter describing the completion of the scheme, so far as to fit this religion for general benefit, and unlimited diffusion.

Respecting

Respecting the first great portion, which we call the Old Testament, the leading features appear peculiarly striking. In this book alone, during those ages, was maintained the first great truth, of there being *only ONE living and true God* ; which, though now so universally acknowledged, was then unconceived by the politeſt nations, and moſt accomplished philoſophers. And reſpecting both portions of this book, but eſpecially the latter, known by the name of the New Testament, this no leſs intereſting remark is to be made, that, in every eſſential point, nearly the ſame view is taken of man's weakneſſes and wants, of the nature of the human mind, and what is neceſſary to its eaſe and comfort, as is taken by the wiſeſt heathen philoſophers ; with this moſt important difference, however, that the *chief good* of man, that *pure perennial mental happineſs*, about which they ſo much diſcourſed, after which they ſo eagerly panted, but of which they ſo confeſſedly

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failed,

failed, is here spoken of substantially, in their notion of it, as a blessing actually *possessed*, and the feeling of it described in such language as bears, so far as it is possible for human expressions to bear, the stamp of conscious truth and unsophisticated nature.

May we be allowed, in this connexion, to give a superficial sketch of the defects in the system of the ancient philosophers? The belief in a life to come was confined to a few, and even in them this belief was highly defective. Those who asserted it, maintained it only in a speculative and sceptical way; and it would not be easy to produce an instance of their using any doctrine of rewards and punishments in a future state, as their *instrument in promoting virtue*. They decorated their system with beautiful sayings, on the immortality of the soul; but they did not support it upon *this* basis. There was, therefore, no foundation to their fabric. *Poetry*, indeed, had her Elysium and her Tartarus. It appears, however,

however, that the *philosophy* of Greece and Rome, in proportion as it advanced, diminished the strength of the impression which the poets had made on the minds of the vulgar ; and thus the very religion of the sages tended to lessen among the people the sense of a future responsibility.

The ancient philosophers had no idea of what we designate by the name of the *grace and mercy of God*. They had some conception of his bounty, of his providential care, of all his natural perfections ; and of some even of his moral excellencies ; for example, of his benevolence and justice. But their united wisdom never framed a sentence like that in which the true God was revealed to Moses : “ The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” It is on this part of the character of God, that the Scripture is so abundantly full. This ignorance of the mercy of God associated itself in the Heathens, with much other religious

religious and moral blindness. From this ignorance, that God was merciful, their only means of persuading themselves that they were in his favour, was to assume that they were upright. And, who can estimate the moral consequences of an habitual effort to represent to ourselves all our own actions, as not having any of the guilt of sin, and as not impeaching our claims to the justice of the Almighty? The lofty sentiment, that they were themselves a species of Gods, was sometimes resorted to, at once as a source of self-complacency, and as the supposed means of virtue. The Stoic affected to rise superior to the temptations of the body, to soar above all sense of guilt, and all dread of pain, by the aid of an extravagant, and almost atheistical sentiment, which was opposite to common-sense, and subversive of all true humility, a quality which is the very basis of Christian virtue. He was his own God: for he assumed to himself to be able, by his own strength, if
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he would but exert it, to triumph over fortune ; in other words, over Providence, over pain, fear, and death itself ; and to rise, by the same strength, into a participation of the nature of the Eternal. Thus, as an eminent writer has observed, “ those who endeavoured to cure voluptuousness, resorted to pride as the means of virtue.” In the latter ages, indeed, not a few appear to have been at once elated by Stoical pride, and dissolved in Epicurean luxury.

Their doctrine even of a Providence, connected as it was with the merely mundane system, led to much misconception of the nature of true morality, and to gross superstition. From ignorance of future retribution, they imagined that virtue and vice received their exact recompence *here*. They were religious, therefore, even to superstition, in assuming the existence of providential interferences in the case of the commission of palpable crimes ; and they were tempted to esteem those actions, how-
ever

ever sinful, to be no offences against God, which God did not mark by some temporal punishment *.

Such appear to have been some of the chief deficiencies of the heathen system ; a system which strongly points out the want of such a light as that which the Gospel affords. The philosophers themselves seemed conscious of some great defect, and thus the very revelation which Christianity has furnished, supplied all that was necessary to man, and comes recommended by the acknowledged occasion for it.

How striking are the peculiarities, how obvious the superiority, which, even on a first attentive perusal, fill the mind of the serious reader of the Scripture ! But what infidel writer has so much as taken its most obvious facts into sober consideration ? who has attempted to explain how

* A striking instance of this disposition to abuse the doctrine of Providence, was exhibited in the speech of Nicias to his soldiers, after they were defeated at Syracuse.

the writers of the Old Testament should differ as they have done from all the writers in the world, not only in maintaining so pure a theology, but in connecting with it a national history, through which that theology passes as a chain, binding together and identifying itself with their whole system, civil and religious? This history, involving supernatural events, may be a reason why the wilful infidel should reject it without examination. But let him who pretends to candour, attentively consider these records, and try if he can project even an outline of Jewish history, from which those miraculous interpositions shall be consistently excluded. There are facts in this narration which cannot be disputed: the Jews necessarily having a history as well as other nations. Let the sober infidel, then, endeavour to make out for them an hypothetic history, in which, leaving out every thing miraculous, all the self-evident phænomena shall be accounted for with philosophic plausibility. If this be possible,

why has it not been attempted? But if this be really impracticable, I mean, if these events do actually so make up the body of their national history, that no history would be left, if they were to be taken away; then let some farther theory be devised, to explain how a history, thus exclusively strange, should stand connected with a theology as exclusively true? Let the sober deist prove, if he can, that it was unworthy of the God of nature to distinguish, by such extraordinary interferences, that nation, which alone, of all the nations of the earth, acknowledged him; or let him separate, if he be able, that national recognition of the true God from their belief of those distinguishing interpositions. If they alone acknowledged the rightful sovereign of the universe, who believed that that sovereign had signally manifested himself in their behalf, can the deist shew that the belief of the events was not essential to the acknowledgment of the supposed author of them? Or will
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he assert, that the establishment of such a truth amongst that people, who have since actually communicated it to so many other men, perhaps to all, deists not excepted, who really do embrace it ; I say, will he soberly assert that such a purpose did not justly and consistently warrant the very kind of interposition, which the Jewish history presents ?

But let the honest infidel, if such there be, take further into the account the manner in which the maintainers of the one true God have acted upon that belief. Let him examine the principles of the Jewish *moralists*, and see where else, in the ancient world, the genuine interests of virtue are so practically provided for. Let him read the sublime and most cordial effusions of the Old Testament *poets*, and say, where else the Author of Being, and of all good, is so fully recognized, or so suitably adored ? Let him consider the expostulation of the *prophets*, and the self-criminating records of the *historian*, and
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find for them any shadow of parallel in the history of mankind. Let the man of *genius* observe how the minds of the writers were elevated, on what a strong and steady pinion they soared. Let the man of *virtue* reflect how deeply their hearts were engaged; and let the man of *learning* compare what he reads here with all that has come from Heathen poets, sages, or lawgivers; and then, let it be soberly pronounced, whether it is conceivable that all this should exist, without some adequate cause, and, whether any cause can be so rationally assigned, as that which their venerable lawgiver has himself expressed, in terms the most critically apposite, and the most unaffectedly impressive? “Ask now,” says he, “of the days that are past, which
“were before thee, since the day that God
“created man upon earth; and ask from
“the one side of heaven to the other, whether there hath been any such thing as
“this great thing is, or hath been heard
“like it? Did ever people hear the voice
“of

“ of God, speaking out of the midst of
“ the fire as thou hast heard, and live?
“ or has God assayed to go and take him a
“ nation from the midst of another nation,
“ by temptations, by signs, and by won-
“ ders, and by war, and by an out-stretched
“ arm, and by great terrors, according to
“ all that the Lord your God did for you,
“ in Egypt, before your eyes? Unto thee
“ it was shewn that the Lord He is God;
“ there is none else beside him. Know,
“ therefore, this day, and consider it in
“ thine heart, that the Lord He is God;
“ in heaven above, and upon the earth be-
“ neath, there is none else.”

If such be the inevitable conclusion respecting the Old Testament, how much more irresistible must be the impression made by the New! The peculiarity which was adverted to above, ought, even in the eye of a philosophical inquirer, to engage deep attention. I mean, that that to which heathen sages pointed, as the only valuable object of human pursuit, is, in this wonder-

ful volume, described as matter of *possession*. Here, and here only, amongst all the records of human feelings, is *happiness* seriously claimed, and consistently exemplified. To the importance of this point, witness is borne by every wish which a human being forms, and by every sigh which heaves his bosom. But, it is a fact, perhaps not yet sufficiently adverted to, that at no period do heathen sages seem so strongly to have felt the utter inefficiency of all their schemes for attaining this object, as at the period when the light of Christianity diffused itself through the earth. Cicero, that brightest of Roman luminaries, had not only put his countrymen in possession of the substance of Grecian wisdom, to which his own rich eloquence gave new force and lustre, but he had added thereto the deep results of his own observations, during a life of the most diversified experience, in a period the most eventful. And, to this point, he uniformly brings all his disquisitions, that man can only be
happy

happy by *a conquest over himself*; by some energetic principle of wisdom and virtue so established in his bosom, as to make him habitually superior to every wrong passion, to every criminal or weak desire, to the attractions of pleasure, and the shocks of calamity. But it was not Cicero only, who rested in this conclusion: Horace, the gayest of the Latin poets, is little less explicit in his acknowledgment, that man should then only find ease when he had learnt the art *of flying, in a moral sense, from himself*.

To the sentiment of a great philosopher and poet, let us add that of a no less eminent historian. Polybius says, “ It seems
“ that men, who, in the practice of craft
“ and subtilty, exceed all other animals,
“ may, with good reason, be acknowledged
“ to be no less depraved than they; for
“ other animals are subservient only to the
“ appetites of the body, and by them are
“ led to do wrong. But men, who have
“ also sentiment to guide them, are guilty

“ of ill conduct, not less through the abuse
“ of their acquired reason, than from the
“ force of their natural desires *.”

Although, therefore, the doctrine of human depravity be, strictly speaking, a tenet peculiar to Revelation, since it is the Bible alone which teaches how sin entered into the world, and death, with all its attendant woes and miseries, by sin; though it is there alone that we discover the obscurity and confusion which there is in the understanding of the natural man, the crookedness of his will, and the disorder of his affections; though it is there alone that we are led to the origin, and, blessed be God, to the remedy of this disease, in that renewal of our nature, which it is the peculiar office of the holy Spirit to effect; yet, the wiser and more discerning among the heathens both felt and acknowledged, in no inconsiderable degree, the thing itself. They experienced not a little of the general

* Hampton's Polybius, Book 17. p. 393.

weight and burthen of the effect, though they were still puzzled and confounded in their inquiry after the cause. And their continual disappointment here was an additional source of conviction, that the malady, which they painted in the deepest colourings of language, *did* exist. They seemed to have a perception, that there was an object somewhere, which might remedy these disorders, aid these infirmities, satisfy these desires, and bring all their thoughts and faculties into a due obedience and happy regulation. They had a dawning on their minds, that a capacity for happiness was not entirely lost, nor the object to fill and satisfy it quite out of reach. In fact, they felt the greatness of the human mind, but they felt it as a vast vacuity, in which, after all, they could find nothing but phantoms of happiness, and realities of misery.

To these deep-toned complaints, in which all sorts and conditions of men united, Christianity comes forward to make the

first propositions of relief. She recognizes every want and weakness precisely as these sages represented it; and she confidently offers the very remedy for which they so loudly called. Her professed object is to establish, in the human mind, that collateral principle of virtuous and happy superiority to every thing earthly, sensual, or selfish, on which philosophy had so long fixed its anxious, but hopeless desires, and to which alone it looked for real felicity.

In this view, then, Christianity rests her pretensions, not merely on historical evidences, however satisfactory, nor on the fidelity of successive transcribers, however capable of proof; but, on a much more internal, and even more conclusive title, its exquisite correspondence to the exigences of human nature, as illustrated by the wisest of all ages and nations, and as felt by every reflecting child of mortality.

Let, then, the deepest sentiments of heathen philosophers and poets, respecting human nature, be dispassionately compared with
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with those expressions of our blessed Saviour, in which he particularly describes the benefits to be enjoyed by his faithful followers; and let it be judged, whether there is not such a correspondence between what *they want*, and what *he professes to bestow*, as occurs in no other instance in the intellectual world.—*Rest* for their souls, is what they anxiously sought: and, a burning fever of the mind, in which corroding care, insatiable desire, perpetual disappointment, unite in torturing, is the malady of which they uniformly complain. Is it not then wonderful to hear our Saviour so admirably adapt his language to their very feelings? “Come unto me,” says he, “all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you *rest*.—Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find *rest* to your souls.”—“He that drinketh of this water, shall thirst again,” intimating by this very expression, the insufficiency of every thing earthly to satisfy the mind, “but he that drinketh of the water that I

“ shall give him, shall never thirst ; but
“ the water that I shall give, shall be in him
“ a well of water springing up into everlast-
“ ing life.”

Whoever is acquainted with the language of the ancient philosophers must see, that in these expressions our Saviour meets their wishes ; we do not mean to say, that they had or could have any right apprehensions of that preliminary abasement which the Scripture calls repentance, and which was to put them in possession of the rest and peace for which they fought, and which Christ does actually bestow. We do not mean to say, that the pride of unassisted nature could allow them to see that they were indeed objects of pure mercy on the part of God ; and that their knowledge of themselves, or of him, could be such as to bring the real spirit of their wishes to any actual coincidence with the wonderful means, which God, in his goodness, had devised to satisfy them. Though they did occasionally express a sense of an
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evil nature, and a wish for relief from it, yet who but the author of our religion ever met those wishes? In what other instance has a moral physician thus pledged himself to relieve agonized human nature? If there be no such instance, the conclusion is inevitable: that Christianity, from the deep importance, as well as the unrivalled singularity of its overtures, justly claims our most serious inquiry, whether what has been thus promised has been actually accomplished.

Christianity has amply provided for this natural demand; for it has been ordered, that while the New Testament contains every principle necessary for the attainment of human happiness, it should also give us a perfect specimen of its own efficacy. This we accordingly have in the fully delineated character of the Apostle St. Paul. There is, perhaps, no human person in all antiquity, of whose inmost feelings, as well as outward demeanor, we are so well enabled to judge, as of this great Christian teacher,

teacher. The particulars respecting him in the Acts of the Apostles, compared with, and illustrated by, his own invaluable Epistles, make up a full-length portrait of him, in which no lineament is wanting. And, the wisdom of God, in this single arrangement, has furnished a body of evidence in support, both of the truth and the efficacy of our holy religion, which, when attentively examined, will ever satisfy the sincere, and silence the caviller.

The numberless minute and unobvious coincidences between the narrative and the Epistles, have been so illustrated in a late invaluable work *, as to make the authenticity of both matter of absolute demonstration; and, from such an instance of Christian influence, thus authenticated, the pretensions of Christianity itself may be brought to a summary and unequivocal test.

Was St. Paul, then, or was he not, an exemplification of that nobly-imagined wise

* Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*.

man, which the heathen philosophers had pictured to themselves, as the height of human felicity? Does he appear to have found that rest, for which sages panted, and which his divine Master purposed to bestow? Did he possess that virtuous and happy superiority to every thing earthly, sensual, and selfish, which was acknowledged to constitute the very essence of true philosophy? Let him that understands human nature read, and answer for himself.—Let him collect all that has been spoken on this subject by Socrates or Plato, by Cicero or Seneca, by Epictetus or Marcus Antoninus, and judge coolly, whether St. Paul does not substantially exemplify, and, I may add, infinitely out-do it all?

Horace has celebrated the fortitude of Regulus, in one of his most animated odes; but it may most soberly be asked, what was the fortitude of this Pagan hero, when compared with that which was unconsciously displayed by St. Paul in his way to Jerusalem? Regulus, we are told, would
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not turn his eyes toward his wife or his children. In his heroism, therefore, he sinks his humanity. Not so our Apostle; while he fears nothing for himself, he feels every thing for those around him. “What
“ mean ye thus to weep, and to break my
“ heart,” says he, “ for I am ready, not
“ to be bound only, but to die at Jerusa-
“ lem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.” If this be not perfect magnanimity, where was it ever exhibited?

I will add but two instances.—One expressing the feelings which were habitual to himself; the other describing that perfection of goodness, which he wished to be pursued by others: and let the learned infidel find, if he can, a parallel for either. In speaking of himself, after acknowledging an act of friendship in those to whom he writes, he says, “ Not as though
“ I speak in respect of want, for I have
“ learned in whatsoever state I am, there-
“ with to be content. I know both how
“ to be abased, and I know how to
“ abound,

“abound. I am instructed both to be
“full and to be hungry, both to abound
“and to suffer need. I can do all things
“through Christ which strengtheneth me.”
What a testimonial this to the faithfulness of the offer of our Saviour, to which we have already referred! How consummately does it evince, that when he engaged to fulfil that deepest of human desires, the thirst of happiness, he promised no more than he was infinitely able to perform! The Apostle’s exhortation to others, is no less worthy of attention.—
“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are
“true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things
“are pure, whatsoever things are lovely,
“whatsoever things are of good report—
“If there be any virtue, if there be any
“praise, think on these things.” In what human words did genuine moral feeling ever more completely embody itself? Are they not, as it were, the very soul and body of true philosophy? But what philosopher,
before

before him, after such a lesson to his pupils, could have dared to add the words which immediately follow?—"The things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, *do*, and the God of peace shall be with you."

This is a most imperfect portion of that body of internal evidence, which even the most general view of Christianity presses on the attentive and candid mind: and with even this before us, may it not be boldly asked, what else like this has come within human knowledge? On these characters of the gospel then, let the infidel fairly try his strength. Let him disprove, if he can, the correspondence between the wishes of philosophy, and the achievements of Christianity; or destroy the identity of that common view of man's chief good, and paramount happiness. Let him account, if he can, for these unexampled congruities, on any other ground than that of the truth of Christianity; or let him even plausibly elude the matter-of-fact evidence to this truth,

truth, which arises from St. Paul's character. In the mean time, let the pious Christian enjoy his sober triumph, in that system, which not in St. Paul only, but in all its true votaries, in every age and nation, it has produced—"a hope full of immortality,"—"a peace which passeth all understanding,"—"a wisdom pure and peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

If any difficulty, attending particular doctrines of Christianity, should present itself; it will be well first to inquire, whether the doctrine in question be really Christian? and this can only be determined by a dispassionate and impartial recurrence to the Scriptures themselves, particularly the New Testament. Whatever is clearly asserted there, follows inevitably from the established divinity of that which contains it. And in what conceivable case can, not only humility, but rational consistency, be more wisely exercised, than in receiving,

ing, without question, the obvious parts, and then no doubt can be entertained respecting the whole. Happy had it been for the Christian world, had this self-evident maxim been practically attended to; for then what dispute could possibly have arisen about—"that Word which
" was made flesh, and dwelt among us,
" being also God over all, blessed for
" evermore?" Or whether the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose name we are baptized, must not be alike essentially divine? Or whether there can be any misconception in what the redeemed in heaven make the subject of their eternal song: "that the Lamb, which was slain,
" had redeemed them to God by his blood,
" out of every kindred, and tongue, and
" people, and nation?"

That plain and simple readers think they find each of these doctrines clearly set forth in the sacred volume, is a matter of fact, authenticated by abundant evidence; and that, where they have been disputed,

those who have agreed in holding them, have evidently derived a deeper influence from Christianity, both as to the conduct of their lives, and the comfort of their minds, than those who have rejected them,—if it could not be substantiated by innumerable proofs, would be almost self-evident, on a merely theoretic view of the two cases. For who ever derived either practical strength, or mental comfort, from indulging a habit of metaphysical disquisition? And who but such have, in any age of the church, questioned the doctrines of our Saviour's divinity, the three-fold distinction in the divine nature, or the expiatory efficacy of Christ's *one oblation of himself, once offered for the sins of the whole world?*

The Scriptures are so explicit on the last-mentioned great doctrine of our religion, that we are not left to infer its truth and certainty, as we might almost do from the obvious exigences of human nature. That guilt is one of the deepest of the natural feelings, will not be disputed; and, that

the sense of guilt has been, in every age and nation a source of the deepest horrors, and has suggested even still more horrible methods of appeasing the perturbed mind, can be questioned by none, who is acquainted, however slightly, with the history of the world. Atheists in Pagan countries have made this very fact the great apology for their impiety, charging upon religion itself the dismal superstitions, which appeared to them to arise from it. And Plutarch, one of the most enlightened of heathen moralists, concludes that even Atheism itself is preferable to that superstitious dread of the gods, which he saw impelling so many wretched victims to daily and hourly self-torture. The fact is, no misery incident to man involves either greater depth, or complication, than that of a guilty conscience.—And a system of religion, which would have left this unprovided for, we may venture to pronounce, would have been utterly unsuitable to man, and,

and, therefore, utterly unworthy of the wisdom and goodness of God.

How appositely then to this awful feeling, does the doctrine of the atonement come into the Christian system ! How astonishingly has even its general belief chased from the Christian world those superstitious phantoms with which Paganism ever has been, and even at this day is, haunted ! But above all, what relief has it afforded to the humble penitent ! “ This,” said the pious Melancthon, “ can only be “ understood in conflicts of conscience.” It is most true. Let those, therefore, who have never felt such conflicts, beware how they despise what they may yet be impelled to resort to, as the only certain stay and prop of their sinking spirits. “ It is a fearful “ thing,” says an inspired writer, “ to fall “ into the hands of the living God.” Against this fear, to what resource could we trust, but that which the mercy of God has no less clearly revealed to us ? “ Seeing,

“ then, that we have a great high priest
“ that is passed for us into the heavens,
“ Jesus the son of God, let us hold fast our
“ profession ; for we have not a high priest
“ who cannot be touched with the feeling
“ of our infirmities, but was in all points
“ tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
“ Let us, therefore, come boldly to the
“ throne of grace, that we may obtain
“ mercy, and find grace to help us in time
“ of need.”

CHAP. XVII.

The Use of History in teaching the Choice of Favourites. — Flattery. — Our Taste improved in the Arts of Adulation. — The Dangers of Flattery exemplified.

IT is not from the history of good princes alone, that signal instruction may be reaped. The lives of the criminal and unfortunate, commonly unfortunate because criminal, will not be read in vain. They are instructive, not only by detailing the personal calamities with which the misconduct was followed; but by exhibiting that misconduct as the source of the alienation of the hearts of their subjects; and often as the remote, sometimes as the immediate, cause of civil commotions and of revolutions.

But caution is to be learned not from their vices only, but from their weaknesses and errors; from their false judgements,

their ignorance of human nature, their narrow views arising from a bad education, their judging from partial information, deciding from infused prejudices, and acting on party principles; their being habituated to consider petty unconnected details, instead of taking in the great aggregate of public concerns; their imprudent choice of ministers, their unhappy spirit of favouritism, their preference of selfish flatterers to disinterested counsellors, and making the associates of their pleasures the dispensers of justice and the ministers of public affairs *.

'Tis by that close acquaintance with the characters of men which history supplies, that a prince must learn how to avoid a jealous Sejanus, a vicious Tigellinus, a corrupt Spenser and Gavaston, a rapacious Epfom and Dudley, a pernicious D'Ancre, an ambitious Wolfey, a profligate Bucking-

* The Romans seem to have had just ideas of the dignity of character and office attached to the friend of a prince by denominating him, not favourite, but *particeps curarum*.

ham; we allude at once to the minister of the first James, and to the still more profligate Buckingham of the second Charles; a tyrannical Richelieu, a crafty Mazarin, a profuse Louvois, an intriguing Urfini, an inefficient Chamillard, an imperious duchess of Marlborough, and a supple Masfham.

History presents frequent instances of an inconsistency not uncommon in human nature,—sovereigns the most arbitrary to their subjects, themselves the tools of favourites. He who treated his people with disdain, and his parliaments with contempt, was, in turn, the slave of Arran, of Car, and of Villiers. His grandson who boldly intrenched on the liberties of his country, was himself governed by the Cabal.

It may sound paradoxical to assert, that in a period of society, when characters are less strongly marked, a sovereign is, in some respects, in more danger of chusing wrong. In our days, and under our constitution indeed, it is scarcely possible to err so widely, as to select, for ministers, men

of such atrocious characters, as those who have just been held up to detestation. The very improvement of society, therefore, has caused the question to become one of a much nicer kind. It is no longer a choice between men, whose outward characters exhibit a monstrous disproportion to each other. A bold oppressor of the people, the people would not endure. A violent infringer on the constitution, the parliament would not tolerate. But still out of that class, from which the election must be made, the moral dispositions, the political tendencies, and the religious principles of men may differ so materially, that the choice may seriously affect, at once, the credit and happiness of the prince, and the welfare of the country. The conduct of good and bad men will always furnish no inconsiderable means of distinction; yet, at a time when gross and palpable enormities are less likely to be obtruded, because they are less likely to be endured, it is the more necessary for a prince to be able accurately to discriminate

state the shades of the characters of public men.

While, therefore, every tendency to art or dissimulation should be reprobated, the most exact caution should be inculcated, and the keenest discernment cultivated, in the royal education. All that can improve the judgment; sharpen the penetration, or give enlarged views of the human mind, should be put in exercise. A prince should possess that fort of sight, which, while it takes in remote views, accurately distinguishes near objects. To the eye of the lynx, which no minuteness can elude, should be added that of the eagle; which no brightness can blind, for whatever dazzles darkens. He should acquire that justness, as well as extent of mind, which should enable him to study the character of his enemies; and decide upon that of his friends; to penetrate keenly, but not invidiously, into the designs of others; and vigilantly to scrutinize his own. His mind should be stored,

not

not with shifts and expedients, but with large and liberal plans; not with stratagems, but resources; not with subterfuges, but principles; not with prejudices, but reasons. He should treasure up sound maxims to teach him to act consistently; be provided with steady measures suited to the probable occasion, together with a promptitude of mind, prepared to vary them so as to meet any contingency.

In no instance will those who have the care of forming the royal pupil find a surer exercise of their wisdom and integrity, than in their endeavours to guard the mind from the deadly poison of flattery. “Many
“kings,” says the witty South, “have been
“destroyed by poison, but none has been
“so efficaciously mortal as that drunk in
“by the ear.”

Intellectual taste, it is true, is much refined, since the Grecian sophist tried to cure the melancholy of Alexander by telling him, that, “Justice was painted, as seated
“near the throne of Jupiter, to indicate
“that

“ that right and wrong depended on the
“ will of kings ; all whose actions ought to
“ be accounted just, both by themselves
“ and others.”

Compliments are not now absurd and extravagant, as when the most elegant of Roman poets invited his imperial master to pick out his own lodging among the constellations : nor, as when the bard of Pharfalia offered to the Emperor his choice, either of the sceptre of Jupiter, or the chariot of Apollo ; modestly assuring him, that there was not a God in the pantheon, who would not yield his empire to him, and account it an honour to resign in his favour. This meritorious prince, so worthy to displace the Gods, was Nero ! who rewarded Lucan, not for his adulation, but for being a better poet than himself, with a violent death.

The smooth and obsequious Pliny improved on all anterior adulation. Not content with making his Emperor the imitator, or the equal of Deity, he makes him
a pattern

a pattern for it; protesting that “men
“ needed to make no other prayers to the
“ gods, than that they would continue to be
“ as good and propitious lords to them as
“ Trajan had been.”

But the refined sycophant of modern days is more likely to hide the actual blemishes, and to veil the real faults of a prince from himself, than to attribute to him incredible virtues, the ascription of which would be too gross to impose on his discernment. There will be more danger of a modern courtier imitating the delicacy of the ancient painter, who, being ordered to draw the portrait of a prince who had but one eye adopted the conciliating expedient of painting him in profile.

But if the modern flatterer be less gross, he will be, on that very account, the more dangerous. The refinement of his adulation prevents the object of it from putting himself on his guard. The prince is led, perhaps, to conceive with self-complacency that he is hearing the language of truth,
while

while he is only the dupe of a more accomplished flatterer. He should especially beware of mistaking freedom of manner, for frankness of sentiment; and of confounding the artful familiarities of a designing favourite, with the honest simplicity of a disinterested friend.

Where, in our more correct day, is the courtier who would dare to add profaneness to flattery so far, as to declare, as was done by the greatest philosopher this country ever produced, in his letter to prince Charles, that, “as the father had been his creator, so he hoped the Son would be his redeemer? *” But what a noble contrast to this base and blasphemous servility in the Chancellor of James, does the conduct of the Chancellor of his grandson exhibit! The unbending rectitude of Clarendon not only disdained to flatter, in his private intercourse, a master to whom however his pen is always too partial, but

* See Howell's Letters.

it led him boldly and honestly to remonstrate against his flagitious conduct. A standing example for all times, to the servants and companions of kings, he resolutely reproved his master to his face, while he thought it his duty to defend him, somewhat too strongly, indeed, to others. He boldly besought the King, “not to believe
“that he had a prerogative to declare vice
“to be virtue.” And in one of the noblest speeches on record, in answer to a dishonourable request of the King, that he would visit some of His Majesty’s infamous associates; he laid before him with a lofty sincerity, “the turpitude of a man in his
“dignified office, being obliged to countenance persons scandalous for their vices,
“for which by the laws of God and man,
“they ought to be odious and exposed to
“the judgment of the church and state.”—
In this instance superior to his great rival Sully, that no desire of pleasing the King, no consideration of *expediency*, could induce

him to visit the royal mistresses, or to countenance the licentious favourites.

Princes have generally been greedy of praise in a pretty exact proportion to the pains which they have taken not to deserve it. Henry the VIIIth was a patron of learned men, and might himself be accounted learned. But his favourite studies, instead of preserving him from the love of flattery, served to lay him open to it. Scholastic divinity, the fashionable learning of the times, as Burnet observes, suited his vain and contentious temper, and as ecclesiastics were to be his critics, his pursuits of polemical theology brought him in the largest revenue of praise; so that there seemed to be a contest between him and them, whether they could offer, or he could swallow, the most copious draughts of flattery.

But the reign of James the First was the great epocha of adulation in England; and a prince who had not one of the qualities of
a war-

a warlike, and scarcely one of the virtues of a pacific King, received from clergy and laity, from statesmen, philosophers, and men of letters, praises not only utterly repugnant to truth and virtue, but directly contrary to that frankness of manners, and magnanimity of spirit, which had formerly characterized Englishmen. This ascription of all rights, and all talents, and all virtues, to a prince, bold through fear, and presumptuous because he wished to conceal his own pusillanimity, rebounded, as was but just, on the flatterers; who, in return for their adulation, were treated by him with a contempt, which not the boldest of his predecessors had ever ventured to manifest. His enquiry of his company at dinner, whether he might not take his subjects' money when he needed it, without the formality of parliament, indicates, that one object was always uppermost in his mind * ;

* The requisition was allowed in a phrase as disgustingly servile, by Bishop Neile; as it was pleasantly evaded by Andrews.

his familiar intercourse was employed in diving into the private opinions of men, to discover to what length his oppressive schemes might be carried; and his public conduct occupied in putting those schemes into practice.

But the royal person whom we presume to advise, may, from the very circumstance of her sex, have more complicated dangers to resist; against which her mind should be early fortified. The dangers of adulation are doubled, when the female character is combined with the royal. Even the vigorous mind of the great Elizabeth did not guard her against the powerful assaults of the flattery paid to her person. That masculine spirit was as much the slave of the most egregious vanity, as the weakest of her sex could have been. All her admirable prudence and profound policy, could not preserve her from the childish and silly levity with which she greedily invited the compliments of the artful minister of her more beautiful rival. Even that gross in-

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stance of Melvil's extravagance enchanted her, when, as she was playing on Mary's favourite instrument, for the purpose of being over-heard by him, the dissembling courtier affected to be so ravished by her skill, as to burst into her apartment, like an enraptured man, who had forgotten his reverence in his admiration. It was a curious combat in the great mind of Elizabeth, between the offended pride of the queen, and the gratified vanity of the woman; but Melvil knew his trade in knowing human nature;—he calculated justly. The woman conquered.

Princes have in all ages complained that they have been ill served. But, is it not because they have not always carefully selected their servants? Is it not because they have too often bestowed confidence on the unwise, and employments on the unworthy? Because, while they have loaded the undeserving with benefits, they have neglected to reward those who have served them well, and to support those who have served them long?

long? Is it not because they have sometimes a way of expecting every thing, while they seem to exact nothing? And have not too many been apt to consider that the honour of serving them is itself a sufficient reward?

By a close study of the weaknesses and passions of a sovereign, crafty and designing favourites have ever been on the watch to establish their own dominion, by such appropriate means, as seem best accommodated to the turn of those weaknesses and passions. If Leonore Concini, and the duchess of Marlborough, obtained the most complete ascendancy over their respective queens, both probably by artful flattery at first, they afterwards secured and preserved it by a tyranny the most absolute. In connections of this nature, it is usually on the side of the sovereign, that the caprice and the haughtiness are expected; but the domineering favourite of Anne exclusively assumed to herself all these prerogatives of despotic power, and exercised them without mercy, on the intimidated and

submissive queen ; a queen, who, with many virtues, not having had the discernment to find out, that the opposite extreme to what is wrong, is commonly wrong also, in order to extricate herself from her captivity to one favourite, fell into the snares spread for her by the servility of another. Thus, whether the imperious duchess, or the obsequious Masham, were lady of the ascendant, the sovereign was equally infatuated, equally misled.

That attachments formed without judgment, and pursued without moderation, are likely to be dissolved without reason ; and that breaches the most trivial in themselves may be important in their consequences, were never more fully exemplified than in the trifling cause which, by putting an end to the intercourse between the above named queen and duchess, produced events the most unforeseen and extraordinary. While the duke was fighting her majesty's battles abroad, and his duchess supporting his interest against a powerful party at court ;
a pair

a pair of gloves of a new invention, sent first by the milliner to the favourite (impatient to have them before the queen, who had ordered a similar pair), so incensed her majesty, as to be the immediate cause, by driving the duchess from her post, of depriving the duke of his command, compelling the confederates to agree to a peace, preserving Louis from the destruction which awaited him, making a total revolution in parties at home, and determining the fate of Europe*.

To a monarch more eager to acquire fame than to deserve it, to pension a poet will be a shorter cut to renown than to dispense blessings to his country. Louis XII. instead of buying immortality of a servile bard, earned and enjoyed the appellation of *father of his people*: that people whom his brilliant successor, Louis the Great, drained and plundered, or in the emphatic language of the prophet, *peeled and scattered*

* Examen du Prince,

to provide money for his wars, his mistresses, his buildings, and his spectacles. Posterity, however, has done justice to both kings, and *le bien aimé* is remembered with affectionate veneration, while *le grand* is regarded as the fabricator of the ruin of his race.

How totally must adulation have blunted the delicacy of the latter prince, when he could shut himself up with his two royal historiographers, Boileau and Racine, to hear them read portions of his own history. Deservedly high as was the reputation of these two fine geniuses, in the walks of poetry, was that history likely to convey much truth or instruction to posterity, which, after being composed by two pensioned poets, was read by them to the monarch, who was to be the hero of the tale? Sovereigns, indeed, may elect poets to record their exploits, but subjects will read historians.

The conquest of every town and village was celebrated by Boileau in hyperbolic song; and the whole pantheon ransacked

for deities, who might furnish some faint idea of the glories of the immortal Louis. The time, however, soon arrived, when the author of the adulatory ode on the taking of Namur, in which the king and the gods were again identified, was as completely overturned by the incomparable travesty of our witty Prior, as the conqueror of Namur himself was, by its glorious deliverer—

Little Will, the scourge of France,
No godhead, but the first of men *.

A prince should be accustomed to see and know things as they really are, and should be taught to dread that state of delusion, in which the monarch is the only person ignorant of what is doing in his kingdom. It was to little purpose that the sovereign last named, when some temporary sense of remorse was excited, by an affecting representation of the miseries of the per-

* See Boileau's Ode sur la prise de Namur by Louis, and Prior's Poem on the taking of Namur by king William.

secuted protestants, said, “ that he hoped
“ God would not impute to him as a crime,
“ punishments which he had not com-
“ manded.” Delusive hope ! It was crime
enough for a king to be ignorant of what
was passing in his dominions.

There have been few princes so ill disposed, as not to have been made worse by unmeasured flattery. Even some of the most depraved Roman emperors began their career with a fair promise. Tiberius set out with being mild and prudent ; and even Nero, for a considerable time, either wore the mask, or did not need it. While his two virtuous friends maintained their entire influence, every thing looked favourable. But when his sycophants had succeeded in making Seneca an object of ridicule ; and when Tigellinus was preferred to Burrhus, all that followed was a natural consequence. The abject slavery of the people, the servile decrees of the senate, the obsequious acquiescence of the court, the prostrate homage of every order, all concurred to bring
out

out his vices in their full luxuriance, and Rome, as was but just, became the victim of the monster she had pampered. Tacitus, with his usual honest indignation, declares, that as often as the emperor commanded banishments or ordered assassinations, so often were thanks and sacrifices decreed to the gods!

But, in our happier days, as subjects, it is presumed, indulge no such propensities, so under our happier constitution, have they no such opportunities. Yet powerful, though gentler, and almost unapparent means, may be employed to weaken the virtue, and injure the fame of a prince.— To degrade his character, he need only be led into one vice, idleness; and be attacked by one weapon, flattery. Indiscriminate acquiescence and soothing adulation will lay his mind open to the incursion of every evil without his being aware of it; for his table is not the place where he expects to meet an enemy, consequently, he is not on his guard against him. And
where

where he is thus powerfully assailed, the kindest nature, the best intentions, the gentlest manners, and the mildest dispositions, cannot be depended on for preserving him from those very corruptions, to which the worst propensities lead ; and there is a degree of facility, which, from softness of temper, becomes imbecility of mind.

For there is hardly a fault a sovereign can commit, to which flattery may not incline him. It impels to opposite vices ; to apathy and egotism, the natural failings of the great ; to ambition which inflames the heart, to anger which distorts it ; to hardness which deadens, and to selfishness which degrades it. He should be taught, as the intrepid Masillon* taught his youthful prince, that the flattery of the courtier, contradictory as the assertion may seem, is little less dangerous than the disloyalty of the rebel. Both would betray him ; and

* See Masillon's Sermons, abounding equally in the sublimest piety and the richest eloquence.

the crime of him who would dethrone, and of him who would debase his prince, however they may differ in a political, differ but little in a moral view : nay the ill effects of the traitor's crime may, to the prince at least, be bounded by time, while the consequences of the flatterer's may extend to eternity.

CHAP. XVIII.

Religion necessary to the well-being of States.

THE royal pupil should be informed, that there are some half Christians, and half philosophers, who wish, without incurring the discredit of renouncing religion, to strip it of its value, by lowering its usefulness. They have been at much pains to produce a persuasion, that however beneficial Christianity may be to individuals, and however properly it may be taken as the rule of their conduct, it cannot be safely brought into action in political concerns; that the intervention of its spirit will rarely advance the public good, but, on the contrary, will often necessarily obstruct it; and in particular, that the glory and elevation of states must be unavoidably attended with some violation even of those laws of morality, which, they allow, ought to be observed in other cases *.

* It were to be wished that Cromwell had been the only ruler who held, that the rules of morality must be dispensed with on great political occasions.

These assertions, respecting the political disadvantages of religion, have not been urged merely by the avowed enemies of Christian principle, the Bolingbrokes, the Hobbes's, and the Gibbons: but there is a more sober class of sceptics, ranged under the banners of a very learned and ingenious sophist *, who have not scrupled to maintain, that the author of Christianity has actually forbidden us to improve the condition of this world, to take any vigorous steps for preventing its misery, or advancing its glory. Another writer, an elegant wit, but whimsical and superficial, though doubtless, a sincere Christian †, who would be shocked at the excess to which impiety has carried the position, has yet afforded some countenance to it, by intimating, that God has given to men a religion which is

* Mr. Bayle.

† Soame Jenyns. It is true, he puts the remark in the mouth of "refined and speculative observers." But he afterwards affirms in his own person—*That such is indeed the Christian Revelation.*

incom-

incompatible with the whole œconomy of that world which he has created, and in which he has thought proper to place them. He allows, that “government is essential to men, and yet asserts, that it cannot be managed without certain degrees of violence, corruption, and imposition, which yet Christianity strictly forbids. That perpetual patience under injuries must every day provoke new insults, and injuries, yet is this, says he, *enjoined*.”

The same positions are also repeatedly affirmed, by a later, more solid, and most admirable writer, whose very able defence of the divine authority of Christianity and the Holy Scriptures, naturally obtains credit for any opinions which are honoured with his support.

It may be expected, that those who advance such propositions, should at least produce proofs from history, that those states, in the government of which Christian principles have been most conspicuous, other circumstances being equal, have either
failed

failed through error, or sunk through impotence ; or in some other way have suffered from introducing principles into transactions to which they were inapplicable.

But how little the avowed sceptic, or even the paradoxical Christian, seems to understand the genius of our religion ; and how erroneous is their conception of the true elementary principles of political prosperity we learn from one, who was as able as either to determine on the case. He who was not only a politician but a king, and eminently acquainted with the duties of both characters, has assured us, that
 RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION.
 And does not every instinct of the unsophisticated heart, and every clear result of dispassionate and enlarged observation, unite in adopting as a moral axiom this divinely recorded aphorism ?

It would, indeed, be strange, if the great Author of all things had admitted such an anomaly in his moral government ; if in
 direct

direct contradiction to that moral ordination of causes and effects, by which, in the case of individuals, religion and virtue generally tend, in the way of natural consequence, to happiness and prosperity, irreligion and vice, to discomfiture and misery, the Almighty should have established the directly opposite tendencies, in the case of those multiplications of individuals, which are called civil communities. It is a supposition so contrary to the divine procedure, in every other instance, that it would require to be proved by incontestible evidence. It would indeed amount to a concession, that the moral Author of the world had appointed a premium, as it were, for vice and irreligion ; the very idea is prophane-ness. Happily it is clearly contrary also both to reason and experience. Providence, the ordinations of which will ever exhibit marks of wisdom and goodness, in proportion to the care with which they are explored, has, in this instance, as well as in others, made our duty coincident with our hap-

hap-

happiness; has furnished us with an additional motive for pursuing that course, which is indispensable to our eternal welfare, by rendering it, in the case both of individuals and of communities, productive also of temporal good. It was not enough to make the paths of virtue lead to "the fulness of joy" hereafter, they are even now rendered to those who walk in them, "paths of pleasantness and peace."

It would not be difficult to prove, by a reference to the most established principles of human nature, that those dispositions of mind and principles of conduct, which, both directly and indirectly, tend to promote the good order of civil communities, are, in general, produced or strengthened by religion. The same temper of mind which disposes a man to fear God, prompts him to honour the king. The same pride, self-sufficiency, and impatience of control, which are commonly the root and origin of impiety, naturally produce civil insubordination and discontent. One

of the most acute of our political writers has stated, that all government rests on *opinion*; on the opinion entertained by the mass of the people, of *the right to power* in their governors, or on the opinion of its being *their own interest to obey*. Now, religion naturally confirms both these principles; and thereby strengthens the very foundations of the powers of government. It establishes the *right to power* of governors, by teaching, that “there is no power but of God;” it confirms in subjects the sense of its being *their interest to obey*, by the powerful intervention of its higher sanctions and rewards: “they that resist shall receive to themselves condemnation.”

Religion teaches men to consider their lot in life, as a station assigned to them, by Him, who has a right to dispose of his creatures as he will. It therefore tends to prevent, in the great mass of the community, which must ever be, comparatively speaking, poor, the disposition to repine at the more favoured lot, and superior com-

forts of the higher orders; a disposition which is the real source of the most dangerous and deadly dissensions.

Religion, again, as prompting men to view all human events as under the divine direction, to regard the evils of life as the dispensation of Heaven, and often as capable of being rendered conducive to the most essential and lasting benefit; disposes men to bear all their sufferings with resignation and cheerfulness. Whereas, on the contrary, they who are not under its power, are often inclined to revenge on their rulers, the misfortunes, which unavoidably result from natural causes, as well as those which may be more reasonably supposed to have owed their existence to human imprudence and actual misconduct.

Again, if from contemplating these questions in their principles and elements, we proceed to view them, as they have been exhibited and illustrated by history and experience, we shall find the same positions established with equal clearness and force.

Is there any proposition more generally admitted, than that political communities tend to decay and dissolution, in proportion to the corruption of their morals? How often has the authority of the poet been adduced (an author acute and just in his views of life, but not eminent for being the friend of morals or religion), to prove the inefficacy of laws to avert the progress of a state's decline and fall, while it should be carried forward, too surely, in the downward road, by the general corruption of manners. We have already exemplified these truths, in enumerating the causes of the fall of Rome*. On more than one occasion, that state had owed its preservation to its reverence for the awful sanction of an oath. This principle, and indeed the duty which is so closely connected with it, of truth and general fidelity to engagements, are the very cement which holds together societies, and indeed all, whether

* Chap. viii.

greater or smaller, affociations of men ; and that this class of virtues is founded and bottomed on religion, is undeniably evident.

If we pass from the page of history to a review of private life, are we not led to exactly the same conclusions? Where do the politicians, who reason from the evidence of facts, expect to find a spirit of insubordination and anarchy? Is it not in our crowded cities, in our large manufacturing towns, where wealth is often too dearly purchased at the price of morality and virtue? And if we resort to individual instances, who is the man of peace and quietness? Who is the least inclined to “meddle with them that are given to change?” Is it not the man of religious and domestic habits ; whose very connexions, pursuits and hopes, are so many pledges for his adherence to the cause of civil order, and to the support of the laws and institutions of his country?

It is the more extraordinary that any writers, not deliberately hostile to the cause of religion and virtue, should have given any degree of countenance to the pernicious error, which we have been so long combating; because the opposite opinion has been laid down, as an incontestible axiom, by those who will not be suspected of any extravagant zeal for the credit of religion, but, who speak the dictates of strong sense, and deep observation. Hear, then the able, but profligate Machiavel—

“Those princes and commonwealths, who
“would keep their governments entire and
“uncorrupt, are above all things, to have
“a care of religion and its ceremonies,
“and preserve them in due veneration, for
“in the whole world, there is not a greater
“sign of imminent ruin, than when God
“and his worship are despised.”—“A
“prince, therefore, ought most accurately
“to regard, that his religion be well-found-
“ed, and then his government will last;
“for there is no surer way, than to keep that
“good

“good and united. Whatever therefore
 “occurs, that may any way be extended
 “to the advantages and reputation of the
 “religion they design to establish, by all
 “means, they are to be propagated and
 “encouraged; and the wiser the prince,
 “the more sure it is to be done.”—“And
 “if this care of divine worship were re-
 “garded by Christian princes, according
 “to the precepts and instructions of him
 “who gave it at first, the states and com-
 “monwealths of Christendom would be
 “much more happy and firm*.”

Machiavel, it will be said, was at once an infidel and a hypocrite, who did not believe the truth of that religion, the observance of which he solicitously enforced. Be it so; it still deducts nothing from the force of the argument as to the political uses of religion.—For, if the mere forms and institutions, “the outward and visible signs” of Christianity, were acknowledged

* Machiavel's Discourses on Livy.

to be, as they really are, of so great value, by this shrewd politician, what might not be the effect of its “inward and spiritual grace?”

When two able men of totally opposite principles and characters, pointedly agree on any one important topic, there is a strong presumption, that they meet in a truth. Such an unlooked-for conformity may be found, in two writers, so decidedly opposite to each other, as our incomparable Bishop Butler, and the Florentine secretary above cited. Who will suspect Butler of being a visionary enthusiast? Yet has he drawn a most beautiful picture of the happiness of an imaginary state, which should be perfectly virtuous for a succession of ages. “In such a state,” he insists, “there would be no faction. Public determinations would really be the result of united wisdom. All would contribute to the general prosperity, and each would enjoy the fruits of his own virtue. Injustice, force, and fraud, would be unknown—Such a king-

a kingdom would influence the whole earth; the *head* of it would indeed be a universal monarch, in a new sense, and *all people, nations, and languages should serve him* *.”

The profound Butler was, indeed, too great an adept in the knowledge of human nature, and too thoroughly versed in the whole history of mankind, not to know, as he afterwards observes, the impossibility without some miraculous interposition, that a great body of men should so unite in one nation and government, in the fear of God, and the practice of virtue; and that such a government should continue unbroken for a succession of ages; yet supposing it could be so, such, he affirms, would be the certain effect. And may we not also affirm, that even allowing for all the failings and imperfections of human nature, which the prelate has excluded from his hypothesis,

* This is only a short abstract of this fine passage, to the whole of which the reader is referred. Butler's *Analogy*, part first, chap. iii. p. 89, and following.

would

would not a state really approach nearer to this supposed happiness, in proportion as it taught and practised with more sedulity, the principles of religion and virtue?

We cordially agree, indeed, with the famous Cosmo di Medici, that princes cannot govern their states, by “counting a string of beads, or mumbling over Pater-nosters.” But we are, at the same time, equally averse from the religion which assigns such practices to any class of people; and from that ignorance which would make the religion of any order of men, especially of princes, consist in mere ceremonies and observances. Charles the Wise, was at least as sound a judge as Cosmo, of what constituted the perfection of a royal character, when he declared, that, “if there were no honour and virtue left in the rest of the world, the last traces of them should be found among princes.” There should, indeed, be found in the royal character an innate grandeur; a dignity of soul which should shew itself under all circumstances,

cumstances, and shine through every cloud of trial or difficulty. It was from such inherent marks of greatness, that the infant Cyrus, exiled and unknown, was chosen king by the shepherd's children.

It would not, perhaps, be easy to cite an higher authority, on the point in question, the importance of religion to a state, than that of the great and excellent Chancellor de L'Hopital. It was a common observation of his, that, "religion had more influence upon the spirits of mankind, than all their passions put together; and that the cement, by which it united them, was infinitely stronger than all the other obligations of civil society." This was not the observation of a dreaming monk, who, in his cell, writes maxims for a world of which he knows nothing; but the sentiment derived from deep experience, of an illustrious statesman, whose greatness of mind, zeal, disinterestedness, and powerful talents, supported France under a succession of weak and profligate kings. Frugal for
the

the state in times of boundless prodigality; philosophical in a period of enthusiastic fury; tolerant and candid in days of persecution, and deeply conscientious under all circumstances; worthy, in short, and it is perhaps his best eulogium, to be driven, for his virtues, by Catherine di Medici from councils, which his wisdom might have controlled; and who, on giving up the seals which she demanded, withdrew to an honourable literary retreat, with the remark, that, "the world was too depraved for him to concern himself any longer with it." These are the men whom corrupt princes drive from the direction of those states, which their wisdom might save and their virtue might reform.

Another of the political advantages of religious rectitude in a state, is the *security* it affords. For, with whatever just severity we may reprobate the general spirit of revolution, yet, it must be confessed, that it has not, on *all* occasions, been excited by undue discontent, by unprovoked impatience,

patience, nor even by selfish personal feelings; but, sometimes also from a virtuous sense of the evils of oppression and injustice; evils, which honest men resent for others as well as for themselves.

Again, there is something so safe and tranquillizing in Christian piety, as we have already observed, that, though we would be far from reducing it to a cold political calculation; yet, content, submission, and obedience, make so large a practical part of religion, that wherever it is taught in the best and soundest way, it can hardly fail to promote, in the people, the ends of true policy, any more than of genuine morality.

Our wisest sovereigns, partly perhaps for this reason, have paid the deepest attention to the moral instruction of the lower classes of their subjects. Alfred and Elizabeth *,
among

* See a letter of Archbishop Whitgift to the bishops, of which the following is an extract :

“ Your Lordship is not ignorant, that a great part of the dissoluteness of manners, and ignorance in the
common

among others, were too sound politicians to lose this powerful hold on the affections of their people. In addition to their desire to promote religion, they had no doubt discerned, that it ^{is} gross vice, that it is brutal ignorance, which leave the lower class a prey to factious innovators, and

common sort, that reigneth in most parts of this realm, even in this clear light of the gospel, ariseth hereof, for, that the youth, being as it were the frie and seminary of the church and commonwealth, through negligence, both of natural and spiritual fathers, are not, as were meet, trained up in the chief and necessary principles of Christian religion, whereby they might learn their duty to their God, their prince, their country, and their neighbours; especially in their tender years, when these things might best be planted in them, and would become most hardly to be afterwards removed. This mischief might well, in mine opinion, be redressed, if that which in this behalf hath been godly and wisely provided, were as carefully called on and executed, namely, by catechizing and instructing in churches the youth of both sexes, on the sabbath days, in the afternoon. And, that if it may be convenient, before their parents, and others of the severall parishes, who thereby may take comfort and instruction also.

Strype's Life of Whitgift."

render

render them the blind tools of political incendiaries. When the youth of this class are carefully instructed in religion by their rightful teachers, those teachers have the fairest opportunities of instilling into them their duty to the state, as well as to the church ; and they will find that the same lessons which form good Christians, tend to make good subjects. But, without that moderate measure of sound and sober instruction, which should be judiciously adapted to their low demands, they will be likely neither to honour the king, reverence the clergy, nor obey the magistrate. While, on the contrary, by interweaving their duty to their governors, with their duty to God, they will at once be preserved from mischief in politics, and delusion in religion. The awful increase of perjury among us is of itself a loud call sedulously to pursue this object. How should those, who are not early instructed in the knowledge of their Maker, fear to offend him, by that common violation of the solemnity of oaths,

oaths for which we are unhappily becoming notorious? Let us not be deemed needlessly earnest in the defence of a truth of such extreme importance. The political value of religion never can be too firmly believed, or too carefully kept in view, in the government of nations. May it be deeply rooted in the mind of every prince, as a fundamental principle! Let it be confirmed by all the various proofs and examples, by which its truth can be established, and its authority enforced *!

* Mr. Addison speaks of the religious instruction of the poor as the best means of recovering the country from its degeneracy and depravation of manners. And, after drawing an animated picture of a procession of charity children on a day of thanksgiving for the triumphs obtained by the queen's arms, he adds, "for my part, I can scarce forbear looking on the astonishing victories our arms have been crowned with to be, in some measure, the blessings returned upon these charities; and that the great successes of the war, for which we lately offered up our thanks, were, in some measure, occasioned by the several objects (of religiously instructed children) which then stood before us. *Guardian*, No. 105. *These were the sentiments of a secretary of state!*

But,

But, to return.—We most readily concede, that by that exaltation of a state of which Solomon speaks, is not meant, that sudden flash of temporary splendour, which is occasioned by the mutable advantages of war, the plunder of foreign countries, the acquisition of unwieldy territory, or the vertigo of domestic revolutions: but that sober and solid glory, which is the result of just laws; of agriculture and sobriety, which promote population; of industry and commerce, which increase prosperity; of such well-regulated habits in private life; as may serve to temper that prosperity, and by strict consequences, give direction and steadiness to public manners. For, it never can be made a question, whether the solidity of the parts must not contribute to the firmness of the whole; and whether the virtue exercised by collective bodies, can any farther be hoped for, than as it exists in the individuals who compose them. But, on what basis can this superstructure rest, by what principle

can individual virtue be either substantially promoted, or lastingly secured, except by that sense of an invisible, almighty, and infinitely just, and holy sovereign of the universe, which revelation alone has effectually disclosed to us, and reason has recognized as the essence of religion?

Far be it, indeed, from us to deny, that this religious principle may not frequently oppose itself to *apparent* means of aggrandizement, both personal and national. Doubtless it will often condemn that to which human pride would aspire. Even when an object might in itself be fairly desirable, it will forbid the pursuit, except through lawful paths. But, in the severest of such restrictions, it only sacrifices what is shadowy to what is substantial, the evanescent triumphs of a day to the permanent comfort of successive generations.

But, though we do not assert that national prosperity is always, and infallibly, an indication of virtue, and of the distinguishing favour of God, yet we conceive,
that

that such outward marks of the divine favour may more generally be expected, in the case of communities, than of individuals. In communities we see not so much the effect of each particular act of virtue, as of the generally diffused principle. Though virtue is often obstructed in labouring to obtain for itself the advantages which belong to it, this is no proof against its having a tendency to obtain them. The natural tendency, indeed, being to produce happiness, though it may fail to do it in certain excepted cases.

In the case, therefore, of communities and states, where the result of *many* actions, rather than the particular effect of *each*, is seen, it may not altogether unfairly be asserted, that virtue is its own reward. Perhaps it also may be affirmed, that the system of temporal rewards and punishments, which, though chiefly exemplified in the Jewish dispensation, was by no means confined to it, has not equally passed away, with respect to states and nations, as with

respect to individuals. The learned Bossuet has observed, that while the New Testament manifests to us the operation of God's grace, the Old Testament exhibits to us his providential government of the world. We will not dwell on this remark further than to suggest, that even in this view the study of the Old Testament may not be without its uses, even to the modern Statesman, as we know that the Jewish law has clearly been held important, by some of our wisest Legislators.

On the whole, we need not hesitate to assert, that in the long course of events, nothing, that is morally wrong, can be politically right. Nothing, that is inequitable, can be finally successful. Nothing, that is contrary to religion, can be ultimately favourable to civil policy. We may therefore confidently affirm, that impiety and vice, sooner or later, bring states, as well as individuals, to misery and ruin. That, though vice may sometimes contribute to temporary exaltation; in the same degree,

degree, it will, in the end, contribute to promote decay, and accelerate the inevitable period of dissolution.

Let it then be ever kept in view, that the true exaltation is, in fact, that prosperity, which arises from the goodness of the laws, and the firmness and impartiality with which they are executed ; which results from moderation in the Government, and obedience in the people ; from wisdom and foresight in council, from activity and integrity in commerce, from independence of national character, from fortitude in resisting foreign attack, and zeal in promoting domestic harmony ; from patience under sufferings, hardiness in danger, zeal in the love of civil, and vigour in the reprobation of savage liberty ; from a spirit of fairness and liberality in making treaties, and from fidelity in observing them. Above all, from a multiplication of individual instances of family comfort and independence, from the general prevalence, throughout the great mass of the people, of habits of industry, sobriety,

fobriety, and good order, from the practice, in short, of the social and domestic virtues ; of all those relative duties and kindneſſes, which give body and ſubſtance to the various charities of life, and the beſt feelings of our nature.

If ſinful nations appear prosperous for a time, it is often becauſe there has been ſome proportion of good mixed with the evil ; or it is becauſe the Providence of God means to uſe the temporary ſucceſs of guilty nations, for the accompliſhment of his general ſcheme, or the promotion of a particular purpoſe, of humbling and correcting other, perhaps leſs guilty nations ; or it is becauſe “ the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full ;” and the puniſhment of the more corrupt ſtates is delayed, to make their ruin more ſignal and tremendous, and their downfall a more portentous object, for the inſtruction of the world. God, without any impeachment of his moral government, may withhold retribution, becauſe it is always in his power ; he
may

may be long-suffering, because he is everlasting. He may permit the calamity which we see, in order to extract from it the good which we see not. He is never the author of moral evil, and the natural evil, which he does authorize, is both the punishment, and the corrective of the moral. Though God never intended this world for such a complete state of retribution, as entirely to hinder either vice or virtue from occasionally receiving the recompences, and the penalties, due to the other; yet, there is this obvious difference, between nations and individuals, that, whereas individuals the most virtuous are often the most visited with temporal misfortunes, the best governed empires are, on the whole, the most secure of prosperity. And if, in the calamities brought on corrupt states, the innocent always, unavoidably, suffer with the guilty, this furnishes no just charge against the equity of divine Providence, who *here* reckons tremendously with the state *as* a state, but will, separately

and ultimately, reckon with every individual; and thus finally and fully vindicate his own infinite, and much calumniated justice*.

* See Bishop Butler's Analogy, a work which cannot be too strongly recommended.

CHAP. XIX.

Integrity the true Political Wisdom.

THE tendency of a religious temper to exalt a prince into a hero, might be sufficiently illustrated by the single instance of Louis the Ninth. It is notorious, that nothing more severely tries the character of princes as well as of individuals, than remarkable success. It was, however, in this circumstance precisely, that the prince just mentioned evinced how completely his Christian temper had corrected, both the selfishness natural to man, and the arrogance habitual to prosperity.

When, under the unfortunate reign of our Henry the Third, the affairs of England were reduced to a low condition, while those of France were in a highly flourishing state; Louis, in making a treaty with England, generously refused to take an unfair advantage of the misfortunes

fortunes of this country, or to avail himself to the utmost of his own superiority. His concessions to the depressed enemy were liberal; and he soon after reaped the reward of his moderation, in the confidence which it inspired. Louis was chosen, both by Henry and his nobles, to settle the differences between them. In consequence of the recent instance of his public integrity, the foreign adversary was invited to be the arbiter of domestic disagreements; and they were happily terminated by his decision. Let infidels remark, to the disgrace of their scepticism, that the monarch who was, perhaps, one of the greatest instances of Christian piety and devotion, furnished also an example of the most striking moral rectitude!

Henry the Fourth, when only king of Navarre, discovered no less integrity after his glorious victory at Coutras. Being asked what terms he would require from the king of France, after gaining such a
victory,

victory, "Just the same," replied he, "that I should ask after losing one."

It is, however, necessary to observe, that integrity, in order to be successful, must be uniform. Truth, for example, occasionally spoken, may not afford to the speaker any part of the profit which attends the regular observance of truth. The error of corrupt politicians consists much in treating each question, as if it were an insulated case, and then arguing, perhaps not unjustly, that the practice of virtue, in this or that particular instance, will not be productive of good; forgetting that if, in all instances, they would be virtuous, they would then, most probably, obtain the success and full reward of virtue.

We know that even in that particular branch of political transactions, the diplomatic, wherein the strongest temptations to dissimulation and chicanery are held forth to little minds, some of the most able and successful negotiators have generously

rouſly diſdained the uſe of any ſuch mean expedients. The frankneſs and integrity of Temple and De Wit are not more eſteemed by the moralift for their probity, than by the ſtateſman for their true wiſdom. What can there be, indeed, ſo different between the ſituation of two public men, who on the part of their ſeveral countries reſpectively, are negotiating on queſtions of policy or commerce; and that of two private men who are treating on ſome buſineſs of ordinary life, which ſhould render impoſſible, in the public concern, that honeſty which, in the private, is ſo univerſally acknowledged to be the beſt policy, as to have grown into an adage of univerſal and unqualified acceptance. Indeed, as the adage may refer to what is truly politic in the long run, and with a view to general conſequences, we might rather expect, that fraud would be admiſſible into the tranſactions of private men, whoſe ſhort ſpan of life might not be likely to be

be more than counterbalanced by future loss rather than in the concerns of states, which, by containing a long continued existence, a political identity, under all the successive generations of the members of which they are composed, may pay, and pay perhaps severely too, in later times, the price of former acts of fraud and treachery.—Again, in public, no less than in private business, will not any one find the benefit of employing an agent, who possesses a high character for probity and honour? Will not larger and more liberal concessions be made to him who may be safely relied on for paying their equivalent? Once more, how often are public wars, as well as private differences, produced or fermented by mutual distrust! and how surely would a confidence in each other's truth and honesty tend to the restoration of peace and harmony! Even the wily Florentine * allows, that it is advantageous to

* Machiavel.

have a high character for truth and uprightness. And how can this character be in any way so well obtained as by deserving it? It is the disgrace of nations, that in their diplomatic concerns, the maxims of solid wisdom have not been always observed.

Without going the length of admitting the truth of Sir Henry Wotton's light definition of the duties of an ambassador, is it not too often assumed, that the laws which bind private men, and which would doubtless bind the individual minister himself, in his private concerns, may occasionally be dispensed with, in the administration of public affairs; and that strict truth, for instance, which in the ordinary transactions of life is allowed to be indispensable, is too frequently considered as impracticable in diplomatic negotiations?

Don Louis De Haro, the Spanish minister, at the treaty of the Pyrenees, seems to have entertained just views of the value of simple integrity in politicians, for speaking of Cardinal Mazarin, with whom he was negotiating,

gotiating, he said, "that man always pursues one great error in politics, he would always deceive." Mazarin was a deep dissembler and a narrow genius * ; so true it is, that vanity and short-sightedness are commonly at the bottom of dissimulation, though it be practised from a totally opposite idea ; worldly politicians frequently falling into the error of fancying, that craft and circumvention are indications of genius : While, in reality, suspicion is the wisdom of a little mind, and distrust the mean and inefficient substitute for the penetration of a great one. Many, says Lord Bacon, who know how to pack the cards, cannot play them well. Many who can manage canvasses and factions,

* Mazarin himself had spread his own maxims to such good purpose, that one of his creatures, whom he intended to send to negotiate with the Duke of Savoy, implored his Eminence not to insist on his deceiving the Duke *just at that time*, as the business was but a trifle ; because he thought it would answer better to reserve the sacrifice of his reputation for deceiving, till some more important object was at stake.

are yet not wise men. Considering the credit which sincerity stamps on a political character, it is so far from being opposed to discretion, that it constitutes the best part of it. True rectitude neither implies nor requires imprudence; while it costs a politician as much trouble to maintain the reputation of a quality which he has not, as it would really cost him to acquire it. The mazes and windings, the doublings and intricacies of intriguing spirits, ultimately mislead them from the end they pursue. They excite jealousy, they rouse resentment, they confirm suspicion, they strengthen prejudices, they foment differences; and thus call into action a number of passions, which commonly oppose themselves to the accomplishment of their designs. Politicians therefore would do well to remember the remark of the learned Barrow, who was as great a proficient in mathematics, as in morality, that “the straightest line is always the shortest line, in morals, as well as in geometry.” When the character of

integrity is once lost, falsehood itself loses all its uses. The known dissembler is suspected of insincerity even when he does not practise it, and is no longer trusted, though he may happen to deserve to be so.

The character of Lord Sunderland presents a striking instance of the political inefficacy of duplicity. His superior genius, so admirably qualified for business, availed him but little in securing the public esteem, when it was observed, that of three successive princes, who severally set out with a view to establish different interests, he gained the favour of all, by adopting the system of each, with the same accommodating versatility. His reputation for honesty sunk, and he ceased to be trusted in the degree in which he came to be known.

We sometimes hear the more decent politicians, who sanction the appearances, and commend the outward observances of religion, lament that religion does not

produce any great effects upon society. And they are right, if by religion they mean that shell and surface, which merely serve to save appearances. But, is it not to be feared, that these very politicians sometimes disbelieve the reality, and the power of that religion, the exterior of which they allow to be decorous? Yet, this reality and power, believed and acted upon, would certainly produce more substantial effects than can ever *rationaly* be expected from mere forms and shadows. These sage persons frequently lament the deficiency of morals in society, but never the want of religion in the heart. Though, to expect that morality to be firm, which stands on no religious foundation, is to expect stability from an inverted pyramid.

Besides, it is infinitely laborious to maintain an undeviating course of dissimulation, a moment's intermission of which may defeat the policy of years. Yet, this unremitting attention, this wearying watchfulness,

ness, is essential to that worldly policy, of which South says, that "Folly being the superstructure, it is but reason, that the foundation should be falsity." The same acute judge of mankind observes, that the designing politicians of the party he was combating, seemed to act as if they thought "that speech was given to ordinary men to communicate their mind, but to wise men for concealing it."

The dissembler should also remember, that however deeply interest and industry enable him to lay his plans, the interest and industry of others will be equally at work to detect them. Besides, the deepest politician can carry on no great schemes alone, and as all association depends on opinion, few will lend their aid, or commit their safety to one whose general want of probity forbids the hope of perpetual confidence, or of permanent security.

Why do many politicians fail finally of the full accomplishment of their object? Not for want of genius to lay a plausible

plan ; not for want of judgment to seize the most favourable occasions ; not for want of due contempt of conscientious scruples in pushing those occasions ; not for want of fearless impiety in giving full scope to their designs ; but from that ever wakeful Providence, which, if he does not dash their projects before they are acted, defeats the main intention afterwards.—Even the successful usurper, Cromwell, lost the confidence of his army, when they found, in the sequel, that he meant to place himself on the very throne which he had made them believe it was his great object to abolish. Nor was he ever able to adorn his own brows with that crown, for the hope of which he had waded through a sea of crimes. The very means employed by Alexander the Sixth, and Cæsar Borgia, to destroy the Cardinals, rebounded on themselves, and both were poisoned by the very wine which they had prepared for the destruction of their guests.

It is, therefore, the only safety, and the only wisdom and the only sure, unfading prudence, instead of pursuing our own devious paths, to commit our concerns to God ; to walk in his straight ways, and obey his plain commands. For, after all, the widest sphere of a mere worldly politician is but narrow. The wisdom of this world is bounded by this world, the dimensions of which are so contracted, and its duration so short, in the eye of true philosophy, as to strip it of all real grandeur. All the enjoyments of this world, says the eloquent South, are much too short for an immortal soul to stretch itself upon : a soul which shall persist in being not only when honour and fame, but when time itself shall cease to be. The deepest worldly projector, with the widest views, and the strongest energies, even when flushed with success, must, if his mind has never learned to shoot forward into the boundless eternity of an unseen world, feel his genius cramped, his wing flag, and his spirit at a stand.

There seems to have been a spark of the immortal fire even in the regrets of Alexander. It is probable he would not have wept, because he had no more worlds to conquer, had he not deeply felt the sting of disappointment at finding no joy in having conquered this, and thence inferred a kind of vague and shapeless idea of another. There will be always too vast a disproportion between the appetites and enjoyments of the ambitious to admit of their being happy. Nothing can fill the desires of a great soul, but what he is persuaded will last as long as he himself shall last.

To worldly minds it would sound paradoxical to assert that ambition is a *little* passion. To affirm that if really great views, and truly enlarged notions were impressed upon the soul, they would be so far from promoting that they would cure this passion. The excellent Bishop Berkeley, beholding the ravages which ambition had made in his time in France, could not help wishing
that

that its encroaching monarch had been bred to the study of astronomy, that he might learn from thence how mean and little that ambition is which terminates in a small part of what is itself but a point, compared with that part of the universe which lies within our view.

But, if astronomy shews the diminutiveness of that globe, for a very small portion of which kings contend, in comparison with the universe, how much nobler a cure does Christianity provide for ambition, by shewing that not this globe only, but the whole universe also,

Yea, all that it inherits, shall dissolve ;

by reminding the ambitious of the utter insufficiency, to true glory or real happiness, of all that has been created, of all that shall have an end ; by carrying on their views to that invisible, eternal world, which to us shall then emphatically begin to be, when all which we behold shall be no more.

He, therefore, is the only true politician who uniformly makes the eternal laws of
truth

truth and rectitude, as revealed from heaven, the standard of his actions, and the measure of his ambition. "To do justly," is peculiarly the high and holy vocation of a Prince. And both Princes and politicians would do well to enquire, not only whether their scheme was planned with sagacity, and executed with spirit, but whether they have so conducted it, as to leave proper room, if we may so speak, for the favourable interference of God ; whether they have supplicated his blessing, and given to him the glory of its happy issue ? Perhaps more well-meant endeavours fail through neglect in these respects, particularly of fervent prayer for success, than through any deficiency in the wisdom of the plan itself. But because under a fanatic usurpation, in the seventeenth century, hypocrites abused this duty, and degraded its sanctity, by what they profanely called *seeking the Lord* ; the friends of the restored Constitution too generally took up the notion, that irreligion was a proof of sincerity, and that the surest way

way to avoid the hypocrisy, was to omit the duty.

We cannot too strongly censure that most mistaken practice, which, at the period before mentioned, reduced the language of scripture to that of common conversation ; nor too warmly condemn that false taste, which by quaint allusions, forced conceits, and strained allegories, wrested the Bible to every ordinary purpose, and debased its dignity, by this colloquial familiarity. But is there no danger of falling into the opposite error ? If some have unseasonably forced it into the service, on occasions to which it could never apply ; may not others acquire the habit of thinking it seasonable on no occasion at all ?

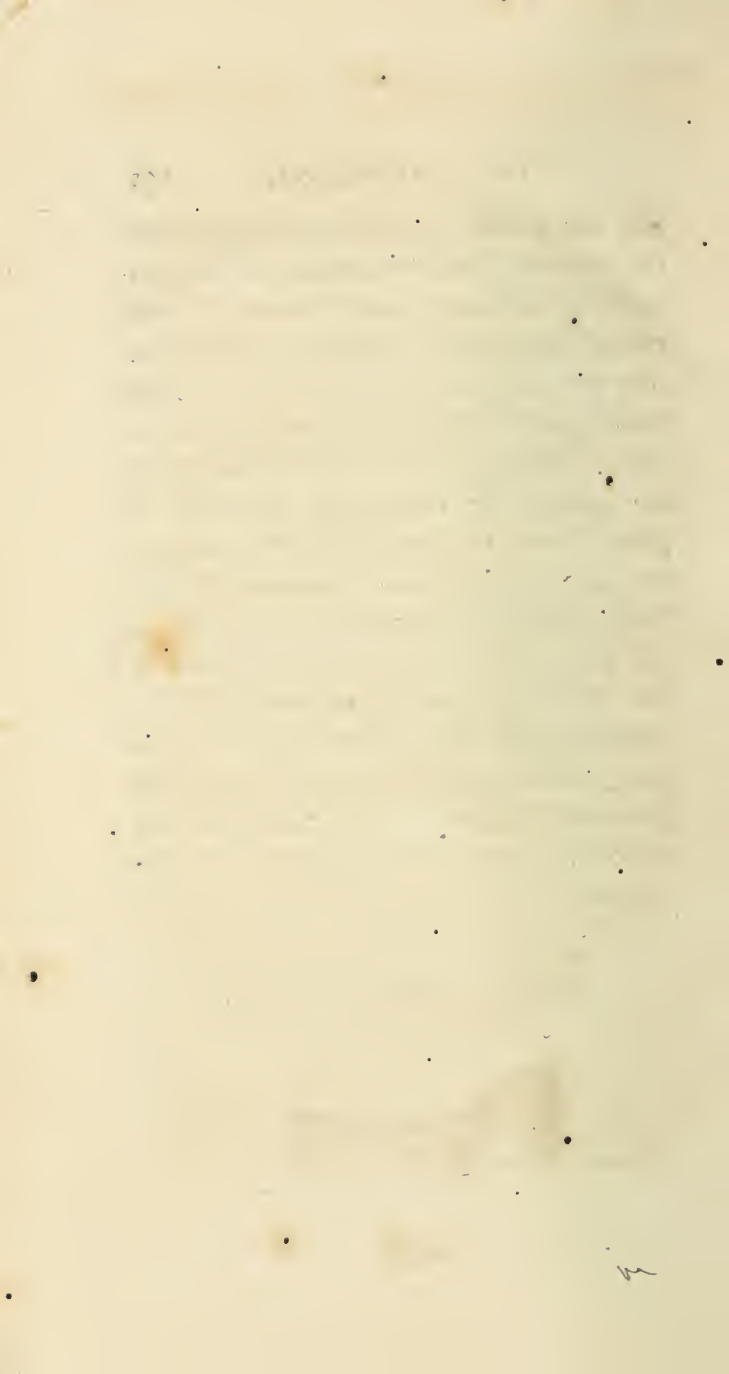
Again—how strangely do we overlook the consummate wisdom, as well as goodness of God, in having made that practice of prayer, the instrument of obtaining his blessing, which is so powerfully operative in purifying and elevating our own hearts. Politicians, with all their sagacity, would
do

do well to learn, that it is likewise one of the many beneficial effects of prayer, that it not only reasonably increases our hopes of success, but teaches us to acquiesce in disappointment. They should learn also, not to wonder, if God refuses to answer those prayers, which are *occasionally* put up on great public emergencies, when those who offer them do not live in the exercise of habitual devotion. They should take it as an axiom of good experience from the incomparable Hooker, that "All things religiously begun are prosperously ended ; because whether men, in the end, have that which religion allowed them to desire, or that which it teacheth them contentedly to suffer, they are, in neither event, unfortunate."

Nor will a truly pious Prince ever be eventually defeated in his designs ; he may not indeed be successful in every negotiation, he may not be victorious in every battle ; yet in his leading purpose he will never be disappointed. For his ultimate

end was to act conscientiously, to procure the favour of God, to advance the best interests of his people, and to secure his own eternal happiness. Whatever the event may be to others, to himself it must be finally good. *The effect of righteousness is peace. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* And, to conclude in the words of the able and profound Barrow—"If God shall not cease to be ; if he will not let go the reins ; if his word cannot deceive ; if the wisest men are not infatuated ; if the common sense of mankind is not extravagant ; if the main props of life, if the great pillars of Society do not fail ;—he that walketh uprightly, doth proceed on sure grounds."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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